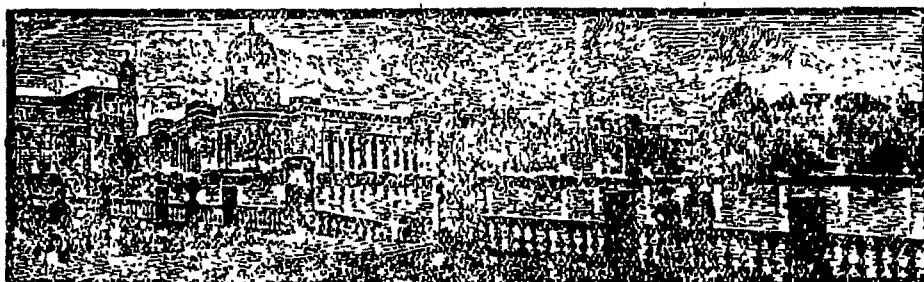
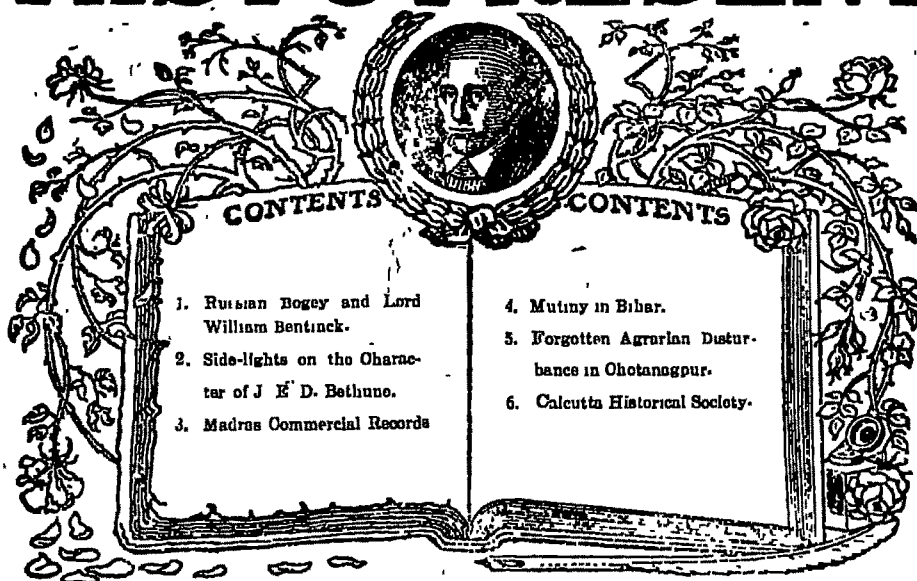




BENGAL PAST & PRESENT



JOURNAL OF THE CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P/6073

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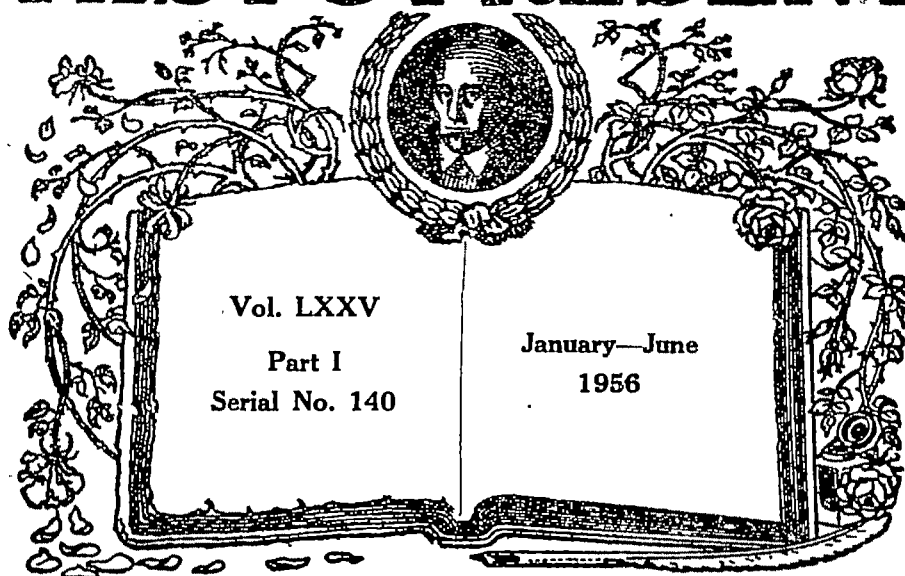
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The Russian Bogey and Lord William Bentinck.

THE Indian career of Lord William Bentinck is well-known for his internal administration which forms an epoch in the history of modern India. But the fact that Bentinck was afraid of the possibility of a Russian invasion of India has not received the attention it deserves. It is interesting to note that at this time the authorities at Calcutta were of the opinion that the British position in India was not sufficiently secure and that the Russians might create trouble any day. It appears from Lord William Bentinck's minute of March 13, 1835, that he was prepared to meet the Russian danger with courage and resolution. His minute deserves attention as an interesting survey of the defence position of the British Empire in India. It is also an elaborate account of the general political situation in India as a whole. As such the minute deserves extensive reproduction.

* * * *

"Before I proceed to describe what the constitution of the army is, and to offer an opinion as to what it ought to be, a preliminary enquiry seems to be necessary as to the specific dangers by which our dominion may be assailed. It is easy enough to determine upon the general principles to be followed and the great end to be attained, viz. that the military body should be so constituted and regulated that by its imposing moral attitude, by its established fidelity and allegiance, it should render hopeless all internal rebellion, as also that by the adequacy of its numbers and by its reputation for discipline and valour, it should be able, as well in the general opinion as in the reality, to overcome any foreign attack. But the elements both of our danger and of our security are of more difficult estimation, and without an exact knowledge both of the one and the other, it is very possible that the precautions adopted for our security may become the very means of our subversion.

Of internal dangers nobody, I believe, entertains less alarm than myself. In answer to those almost universal representations from authorities of the existence of danger, and of the consequent necessity of maintaining a large native army, I have in vain asked to have pointed out to me what the danger is—where are the Horse, Foot, and Artillery by which we are to be ejected? The most recent document of this kind that I have seen is the minute of the Commander-in-Chief at Madras, who describes disaffection as everywhere prevailing, and argues in consequence against any reduction of the army, and thinks necessary an augmentation of it. Indeed, there are those who contend for the same establishment now as when Haidar and Tipu were in the plenitude of their power, and when several substantive states existed in other parts of India. But in Madras, as in Bengal, there no longer exists a single chief, or a

combination of chiefs, who possess even the semblance of a military force. Nor are there any large masses of the population who have the least disposition to rebel against our authority. A vague expression is often used that ours is a Government of opinion. Our security rests upon a very much better foundation, upon the fact which every one from his own observation and experience is thoroughly convinced of, and which is true, that our power is irresistible.

But though no danger appears in any real or tangible shape, it must be allowed when one hundred millions of people are under the control of a Government which has no hold whatever on their affections, when out of this population is formed that army upon the fidelity of which we rely principally for our preservation, when our European troops, of whose support under all circumstances we are alone sure, are so exceedingly limited in number and efficiency as to be of little avail against any extensive plan of insurrection, then indeed the truth of that expression of Sir John Malcolm is not without force, that in an Empire like India we are always in danger, and it is impossible to conjecture the form in which it may approach. This state of uncertainty is greatly aggravated by our conditions of peace, by the spread of knowledge, and by the operations of the press—all of which are tending rapidly as well to weaken the respect entertained for the European character and the prestige of British superiority as to elevate the native character, to make these men alive to their own rights and more sensible of their power. Of the dangers of our old position, upon which men's minds continue to harp and against which they see no security but the largest possible native army, I have no apprehension.

But there is much more reason to fear the changes incidental to our new position of peace and more enlightened state of mind,—a higher elevation of character, knowledge, improved morality, courage, all concurring causes that must produce effects to be dealt with by a very different philosophy from that which has hitherto obtained. So much for internal evils.

I shall now consider the danger from without, thinking of this as of the other, that there is no ground for any present alarm, but that we do not know the time or the quarter, when and where it may appear, but thinking in like manner of both, that it is by immediate preparation only that security can be obtained, and that relief will be too late if we wait, as would be most convenient, the actual occurrence of the mischief.

The following is a brief abstract of our military position. British India may be assailed from the north by the Gurkhas ; from the east by the Burmese ; from the north-west by the Sikhs, the Afghans, and the hordes of Central Asia, in co-operation or otherwise with Persia and Russia ; from the sea on all the other sides of her territory.

An attack from the Gurkhas might partially succeed as a diversion against our hill provinces, but without cavalry or artillery their efforts on the plains could only terminate in disgrace and defeat.

The Burmese have proved themselves totally unequal to compete with our forces in the field.

An attack from the sea, even supposing a momentary superiority against us on that element, could only produce an insulated debarkation, devoid of all the necessary requisites for taking the field or to subsist in a fixed position.

The only real danger with which we may be threatened must come from the north-west, and consequently to that important line of operation our main attention should be turned.

Under its present able and judicious leader it is not possible that the forces of the Punjab will be ever directed against us. Ranjit Singh is old and infirm, and there is no apparent probability that the wisdom of his rule will be inherited by his successor. Troubles, upon his decease, will certainly arise, and it is impossible to foresee the result as relates to the line of conduct which we may be called upon to pursue.

The present state of Afghanistan presents no cause of alarm to India. The success that attended the wretched army that Shah Shuja had under his feeble guidance affords the best proof of the weakness of the Afghan power. The assumption of the supremacy by Dost Muhammad Khan may possibly give greater strength and consolidation to the general confederacy. It is much to be desired that this state should acquire sufficient stability to form an intermediate barrier between India and Persia.

Persia, in its distracted state since the death of the late King, is unequal to any great effort unassisted by Russia, but the co-operation of 20,000 Russians from the Arrus would speedily terminate the civil war, and the advance of the combined force would give them in the first campaign possession of Herat, the key of Kabul.

It is the interest of Russia to extend and strengthen the Persian Empire, which occupies a central position between the double lines of operation of the Autocrat to the eastward and to the westward, and as Persia can never be a rival of Russia the augmentation of her strength can only increase the offensive means of Russia.

From the days of Peter the Great to the present time the views of Russia have been turned to the obtaining possession of that part of Central Asia which is watered by the Oxus and joins the eastern shore of the Caspian. The latest accounts from Kabul state they are building a fort between the Caspian and Khiva. This is their best line of operation against India, but it can only be considered at present as a very distant speculation.

The line of operation of a Russo-Persian army to advance upon Herat is short and easy ; the distances are as follows :—

From the Arrus to Tabriz	...	...	60 miles.
Tabriz to Teheran	...	...	300 „
Teheran to Muschid	...	...	601 „
Muschid to Herat	...	...	228 „
TOTAL	...	1,189	„

with 30,000 men. It may therefore be assumed that the same army could assist Persia with an equal number as an auxiliary force. With a good understanding between the two Governments, with time for preparation, and with good management there could be no difficulty in transporting this force to Herat. The Russians are accustomed to move in countries similarly circumstanced. In Turkey the Russian army always carried with it two month's supply of grain and handmills for grinding it, but they never issue any part of this supply until all other means of obtaining it have failed.

What the policy of Russia might be after taking possession of Herat it is necessary now to consider, but it is impossible to deny that she might arrive at that point in legitimate support of her ally, the King of Persia, and it is equally difficult to deny that from that point she may proclaim a crusade against British India, in which she would be joined by all the warlike restless tribes that formed the overwhelming force of Timur. The distances from Herat to Attock are :—

Herat to Kandahar	...	...	...	560 miles.
Kandahar to Ghazni	...	...	...	190 „
Ghazni to Kabul	...	...	...	82 „
Kabul to Attock	...	...	...	200 „
TOTAL				1,032 „

The Afghan confederacy, even if cordially united, would have no means to resist the power of Russia and Persia. They probably would make a virtue of necessity and join the common cause, receiving in reward for their co-operation the promise of all the possessions that had been wrested from them by Ranjit Singh, and expecting also to reap no poor harvest from the plunder of India. But however this may be, it will be sufficient to assume the possibility that a Russian force of 20,000 men fully equipped, accompanied with a body of 100,000 horse, may reach the shores of the Indus, that Ranjit Singh has no means to resist their advance, and that the invaders, having crossed the Indus into the Punjab, would find themselves in possession of the parts of India, the most fertile of resources in every kind, and secure on every side from being harassed and attacked even if they had not on their side a body of irregular cavalry much more numerous and efficient than any we have to oppose to them.

I shall assume, then, that the attack against which we have to provide is to consist of the above-mentioned force. I shall now proceed to inquire into the composition of the army of India, of the physical and moral qualities of the native armies of the different Presidencies, and of the adequacy and efficiency of the present proportion of our European force to our security and defence against all dangers.

In the margin (1) is inserted an abstract of the rank and file of all descriptions in the native armies of the three Presidencies—their height and weight, and the countries from whence they are recruited.

It appears from the annexed statements that the whole of the Bengal army, and one-half of that of Bombay, including all the cavalry, are Hindustanis. The Madras army is recruited principally from their own territories, and has only a small portion of Bengal men in their ranks. When at Utakamand all the Governments were requested to submit to a Military Committee the following question, 'Whether the order of the Court of Directors, issued about three years ago, restricting the recruiting of each of three armies to the limits of its own Presidency, had operated beneficially; or whether it would be better to permit the Madras and Bombay armies to recruit as formerly in the Bengal territory?' The question did not apply to the Bengal army. The Madras Committee recommend that in the cavalry no alteration should be made, the men being chiefly Mussulmans from the Carnatik. The number of Hindus in each regiment amount to about fifty, which it is proposed to increase to an hundred. In the infantry they think that a proportion of Bengal

(1) Rank and File of the Three Armies.

Regular Infantry.				Irregular Infantry			
Bengal,	74	regiments	...	50,320	Bengal,	10	regiments ... 7,504
Madras,	52	"	...	35,360	Bombay,	1	" ... 680
Bombay,	26	"	...	17,680			
				103,360			8,184
Regular Cavalry.					Cavalry.		
Bengal,	10	regiments	...	4,440	Bengal,	4	regiments ... 2,526
Madras,	8	"	...	3,552	Bombay,	1	" ... 832
Bombay,	3	"	...	1,332			
				9,324			3,358
Total Regular Native Troops ...				...	...		
Total Irregulars ...				...	...		

Average of Heights and Weights.

Bengal Infantry.				Height.		Weight.	
				ft.	in.	st.	lbs.
Recruited generally in the Upper Provinces of Bengal				5	7.82	9	0.8
Madras Infantry.							
Men formerly recruit boys	...	...	...	5	6.36	7	9.73
Madrasis recruited	...	...	...	5	6.34	8	1.10
Hindustanis recruited	...	...	...	5	6.59	8	5.28
Bombay Infantry.							
Men formerly recruit boys	...	...	...	5	4.75	8	5.15
Konkanis recruited	...	...	...	5	5.5	8	5.25
Deccanis recruited	...	...	...	5	5.5	8	9.25
Hindustanis recruited	...	...	...	5	6.3	9	0.5

men, about an hundred per regiment, might be introduced with advantage. In the Golundauze one-fourth of the whole are from the Bengal Provinces.

The Bombay Committee report that the Court's restrictive order has been totally imperative, because though the order had been so far obeyed that no recruiting parties had been sent to Bengal, yet the Bengal men having voluntarily presented themselves for enlistment, they had been engaged as before. The only change recommended by the Committee is that, for the purpose of getting a better description of men, recruiting parties shall, as before, be sent to Bengal. (2)

One of the members, Major Robertson, dissents from his colleagues. He prefers recruiting exclusively from the Bombay territories, with the exception of that cavalry and Golundauze, 'who, requiring a much larger description of men, must have recourse to Hindustan.'

From the preceding statements it appears that the Hindustani is larger and more robust than the native south of the Narbada, and the presumption must be that he is considered a more powerful if not a better soldier. His habits, indeed, are much more military, for not only, as appears above, does he go to seek service in Bombay, but the infantry in the service of the Raja of Nagpur, as well as the Nizam's contingent, consist entirely of Hindustanis. In a late letter from the Resident of Haidarabad he mentions that one of the Arabs, or of the Horsemen from our Bengal Province of Rohilkhand, was equal to ten or twenty of the other men of the Nizam's force; and in the attempt recently made by Shah Shuja to recover his territories, it was the battalion of Hindustanis and the Rohillas, under an officer of the name of Campbell, that was particularly distinguished.

I have not read without surprise the pretensions set forth in behalf of the Madras army. Sir Thomas Munro upon many occasions advocates their occupation of the whole of the Peninsula south of the Narbada. I submit the following extracts from his correspondence (A.D. 1820):—

'The Narbada is unquestionably the proper boundary between Bengal and Madras, not only on account of its natural barrier formed by the river and the broad range of hills which accompany it, but of its being the line of separation between the Deccan and Hindustan, and between natives speaking different languages. The Bengal army, composed of men from Hindustan, dislike serving south of the Narbada, and do not readily assimilate either with the natives of the country or with the Madras troops.'

I must presume that the Bombay army was at that time upon a very low establishment, and had no Hindustanis in its ranks. The dislike of the natives of Hindustan to serve south of the Narbada has subsequently been proved to

(2) The following statement would seem to support the opinion that the Hindustanis engaged at Bombay are inferior in stature and character to those of the Bengal army:—

Infantry.	Height.		Cavalry all Hindustanis	
	ft.	in.	Corporal Punishment.	
Bengal	...	5 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	Bengal	... 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.
Bombay	...	5 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	Bombay	... 42

A more severe discipline is supposed to prevail in the army.

- To the officers I conceive that the larger field of employment and the superior healthiness of many of the stations in the Upper Provinces would be agreeable. To the men it would be much more satisfactory to be brought nearer their homes, and to be saved the danger of the long journey which has been so fatal to many when returning on furlough. The State, besides the saving from the reduction of the staff, would make a great gain in the comparative cheapness of all camp establishments, of followers, &c. It is an extraordinary fact not yet accounted for that in all the stations occupied alternately by Madras, Bombay, and Bengal troops, the Bazaar prices have invariably fallen with the last and risen with the two former.

The Bombay division would under this alteration occupy only the stations within their frontier, transferring the southern Maratha country to Madras, Nagpur (6) and Disa to Bengal.

In considering the question of internal danger those officers most conversant with India affairs who were examined before the Parliamentary Committee apprehend no danger to our dominion as long as we are assured of the fidelity of our native troops. To this opinion I entirely subscribe. But others again view in the native army itself the source of our greatest peril. In all ages the military body has been often the prime cause, but generally the instrument, of all revolutions; and proverbial almost as is the fidelity of the native soldier to the chief whom he serves, more especially when he is justly and kindly treated, still we cannot be blind to the fact that many of those ties which bind other armies to their allegiance are totally wanting in this. Here is no patriotism, no community of feeling as to religion or birthplace, no influencing attachment from high considerations, or great ignorance, capable of the strongest religious excitement, and very sensitive to disrespect to their persons or infringement of their customs.

I shall quote from the evidence a few of those passages bearing upon this subject which appear to me to have the greatest force and truth. Mr. Henry Russell observes:—

"The greatest danger we have to apprehend is from our native army; our military force is the exclusive tenure by which we hold the government, and the fidelity of the troops of whom that force is composed is necessarily precarious. They are foreigners and mercenaries. They are attached to a Government that pays them well and treats them kindly, &c., but we have no hold upon them through either national honour or national

(6) The following table of distances shows that Nagpur is as conveniently placed for support from three of the great military stations in Bengal as from Bombay, and much nearer to the divisions in Malwa and Sagar than even to Bombay.

Nagpur to	Miles	Nagpur to	Miles
Bombay	560	Sagar (c)	181
Madras	735	Benares	446
Mhow (a)	351	Allahabad	450
Nimach (b)	505	Agra	669

(a) Left cantonment of the Rajputana force.

(b) Centre of the Rajputana force.

(c) Head-quarters of Sagar division.

prejudices, and cannot expect from them what we do from English soldiers fighting for English objects. They are peculiarly susceptible of being practised upon, and may be induced either by our own mismanagement or by the artifices of designing persons to turn against us those very arms which now constitute our only strength.'

This intelligent officer makes a remark too true at the present day with respect to the Madras Army:—

'The details of the army had for the first time in India fallen into the hands of a school which thought that everything depended on show, and that the sacrifice was too great for the attainment of outward smartness and uniformity.'

There are parts of Mr. Holt Mackenzie's evidence well worthy of attention, for no man of his time in India possessed the same general knowledge or could form a more accurate and enlightened judgment upon all subjects connected with our rule. He observes: 'I do not think the sepoys have any attachment to the English as a nation; on the contrary, I apprehend that a considerable number of that part which consists of Moslems must generally have a national, or rather I should say a religious, dislike to the English.' He thinks 'the sepoys have a great deal of attachment to their officers, but that this rests upon personal character rather than on anything that may be called attachment to the nation generally.' He thinks 'the sepoys, as long as they are well paid, will have so strong a sense of the duty of being faithful to those who so pay them as to be only overcome by some powerful cause of discontent or excitement.' He thinks a larger native army is quite essential for maintaining the tranquillity of the country, but he would be 'very sorry to see its defence entrusted to them without a large European force.' He is not aware of any circumstances causing immediate danger, but he thinks, 'on general principles that there is much prospective danger.'

It is only since I recorded different minutes enforcing the precedence and expediency of bettering the condition of the native army and of preventing discontent by timely concession and precaution that I have read a passage in a letter from Sir Thomas Munro, written in 1817, in which I find a view of our future situation and the consequences appertaining to it quite in unison with the sentiments I have so often expressed. He observes: 'But even if all India could be brought under the British dominion, it is very questionable whether such a change, either as it regards the natives or ourselves, ought to be desired. One effect of such a conquest would be that the Indian army, having no longer any warlike neighbours to control, would gradually lose its military habits and discipline, and that the native troops would have leisure to feel their own strength, and, for want of other employment, to turn it against their European masters.' He concludes a long and able argument upon the question whether in the event of our conquest of the whole of India the condition of the people would be better than under their native princes, which he doubts, with this remark: 'There is perhaps no example of any conquest in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share in the government of their

be entirely unfounded. The Government and army of Bombay are quite disregarded. Again (A.D. 1804):—

'When Haidarabad and Nagpur were great foreign and independent states' (and more likely to act against us than with us) 'the immediate control of Bengal was right, more especially as it did not affect the authority of the Madras Government over its army, of which only two battalions were several years at Haidarabad, but both Haidarabad and Nagpur are as completely dependent upon us as Mysore. They must at some period or other fall entirely into our hands, and the internal administration must in the meantime be chiefly directed by our Resident. At present the discipline of our army is much injured by our having 20,000 men beyond our frontier removed in a great measure from our control. (3).

Again (A.D. 1804):—

'I am sorry to hear it reported that it had been in agitation to relieve the subsidiary force at Haidarabad with Bengal troops, I think there are many strong public grounds for having no Bengal troops either there or at Poona. It is easier to carry on war in all the countries south of the Narbada from Mysore than from Bengal. Where troops are in all respects equal there is still an advantage in having those who are to act together drawn from one and not from different establishments, but the local troops are perhaps in some respects superior to those of Bengal. They are more regular, more tractable, more patient under privations, and they have been more accustomed to military operations.'

These remarks are more applicable to 1804 than to 1835. There are no enemies to war against. The greater experience in military operations now rather belongs to the Bengal troops, and the preference assigned to the Madras sepoy for certain qualities would not now be as readily admitted.

I have quoted largely from Sir Thomas Munro because I consider his authority superior to all others, but allowance must be made in the present case for a spirit of partiality, if not of partizanship, which as a Madras officer it was natural for him to feel. But it is impossible for any dispassionate observer who has seen the Madras sepoys not to say that their physical defects and delicate frame, supposing all other qualities equal, render them very inferior to the Northern Hindustanis, and that consequently as a body of men they are inferior to either of the other armies. The regulated standard of each army is noted in the margin. (4)

(3) This will be in part obviated by the transfer of a General Officer from the ceded districts to Haidarabad.

(4) Bengal.	Madras.	Bombay.
M.C., 8 August, 1796, Carroll's code, chap. lx, sec. 42. No sepoy is to be entertained who is under 16, or above 30 years of age, unless in the latter case he shall have served before.	The standard of the Madras army was raised in 1829 from 5 ft. 4 in. to 5 ft. 6 in. for Horse Artillery and Cavalry, to 5 ft. 5 in. for Infantry of the line. Before 1829 the standard for all appears to have been 5 ft. 4 in.	The lowest standard for the Cavalry is 5 ft. 6 in. age 24 yrs. For infantry 5 ft. 3 in., age not above 22 years. For Grenediers 5 ft. 6 in. and upwards.

I come next to the Bombay army, composed in equal proportions of Hindustanis and of men from their own proper territories. It would have been satisfactory if the Committee, who do not recommend any change in this divided composition, had stated their reasons for it. The Bombay men seem to have no advantage in strength and size over the Madras sepoy.

I have often had occasion to remark upon the expensive character of the Bombay establishment, urging always the expediency of a compulsory order for the adjustment of their expenditure to their income. And in no instance has this assertion such strong confirmation as in respect to the formation of the Military Establishment. The army of Bombay consists of:—

Native Infantry	...	...	17,680
„ Cavalry	...	...	1,322
			19,002

To superintend this small force they have one Lieutenant-General and three Major-Generals, the same general staff as in the other Presidencies, with all the appendages of commissariat, ordnance establishments, pay and audit departments &c. belonging to a large army. I beg a reference to the general distribution abstract of the Bengal army furnished by the Quartermaster-General, in which it will appear that there are three divisions almost equal in amount to the whole Bombay army under the charge of one Major-General viz. :—

Presidency	...	...	17,308
Cawnpur	...	...	11,798
Meerut	...	...	16,551

This arrangement was caused by a different order of things when the Bombay Presidency was disconnected with the others, and when separate establishments were indispensable to its efficiency. The necessity no longer exists, and it seems practicable to substitute for it another which will save a very great charge, and will, I venture to think, not be unacceptable to all the individuals concerned.

I would propose that the Bombay army as such should be at once abolished, the Hindustani half of it being transferred in complete regiments to the Bengal army, the Bombay half (5) to remain as a separate corps to be recruited always within the territories ; to be commanded by a Major-General with the same staff as any other division of the army, and the commissariat and ordnance departments being incorporated with those of Bengal or Madras as may be convenient. I am of course supposing the previous adoption of the general equalisation of all allowances.

(5) As this separate corps would be liable to degenerate into a sort of militia it might perhaps be a better arrangement to incorporate the Bombay half in the Madras army, in the same manner as the Hindustani half would be drafted into that of Bengal.

- To the officers I conceive that the larger field of employment and the superior healthiness of many of the stations in the Upper Provinces would be agreeable. To the men it would be much more satisfactory to be brought nearer their homes, and to be saved the danger of the long journey which has been so fatal to many when returning on furlough. The State, besides the saving from the reduction of the staff, would make a great gain in the comparative cheapness of all camp establishments, of followers, &c. It is an extraordinary fact not yet accounted for that in all the stations occupied alternately by Madras, Bombay, and Bengal troops, the Bazaar prices have
- invariably fallen with the last and risen with the two former.

The Bombay division would under this alteration occupy only the stations within their frontier, transferring the southern Maratha country to Madras, Nagpur (6) and Disa to Bengal.

In considering the question of internal danger those officers most conversant with India affairs who were examined before the Parliamentary Committee apprehend no danger to our dominion as long as we are assured of the fidelity of our native troops. To this opinion I entirely subscribe. But others again view in the native army itself the source of our greatest peril. In all ages the military body has been often the prime cause, but generally the instrument, of all revolutions; and proverbial almost as is the fidelity of the native soldier to the chief whom he serves, more especially when he is justly and kindly treated, still we cannot be blind to the fact that many of those ties which bind other armies to their allegiance are totally wanting in this. Here is no patriotism, no community of feeling as to religion or birthplace, no influencing attachment from high considerations, or great ignorance, capable of the strongest religious excitement, and very sensitive to disrespect to their persons or infringement of their customs.

I shall quote from the evidence a few of those passages bearing upon this subject which appear to me to have the greatest force and truth. Mr. Henry Russell observes:—

"The greatest danger we have to apprehend is from our native army; our military force is the exclusive tenure by which we hold the government, and the fidelity of the troops of whom that force is composed is necessarily precarious. They are foreigners and mercenaries. They are attached to a Government that pays them well and treats them kindly, &c., but we have no hold upon them through either national honour or national

(6) The following table of distances shows that Nagpur is as conveniently placed for support from three of the great military stations in Bengal as from Bombay, and much nearer to the divisions in Malwa and Sagar than even to Bombay.

Nagpur to	Miles	Nagpur to	Miles
Bombay	560	Sagar(c)	181
Madras	735	Benares	446
Mhow(a)	351	Allahabad	450
Nimach(b)	505	Agra	669

(a) Left cantonment of the Rajputana force.

(b) Centre of the Rajputana force.

(c) Head-quarters of Sagar division.

prejudices, and cannot expect from them what we do from English soldiers fighting for English objects. They are peculiarly susceptible of being practised upon, and may be induced either by our own mismanagement or by the artifices of designing persons to turn against us those very arms which now constitute our only strength.'

This intelligent officer makes a remark too true at the present day with respect to the Madras Army:—

'The details of the army had for the first time in India fallen into the hands of a school which thought that everything depended on show, and that the sacrifice was too great for the attainment of outward smartness and uniformity.'

There are parts of Mr. Holt Mackenzie's evidence well worthy of attention, for no man of his time in India possessed the same general knowledge or could form a more accurate and enlightened judgment upon all subjects connected with our rule. He observes: 'I do not think the sepoys have any attachment to the English as a nation; on the contrary, I apprehend that a considerable number of that part which consists of Moslems must generally have a national, or rather I should say a religious, dislike to the English.' He thinks 'the sepoys have a great deal of attachment to their officers, but that this rests upon personal character rather than on anything that may be called attachment to the nation generally.' He thinks 'the sepoys, as long as they are well paid, will have so strong a sense of the duty of being faithful to those who so pay them as to be only overcome by some powerful cause of discontent or excitement.' He thinks a larger native army is quite essential for maintaining the tranquillity of the country, but he would be 'very sorry to see its defence entrusted to them without a large European force.' He is not aware of any circumstances causing immediate danger, but he thinks, 'on general principles that there is much prospective danger.'

It is only since I recorded different minutes enforcing the precedence and expediency of bettering the condition of the native army and of preventing discontent by timely concession and precaution that I have read a passage in a letter from Sir Thomas Munro, written in 1817, in which I find a view of our future situation and the consequences appertaining to it quite in unison with the sentiments I have so often expressed. He observes: 'But even if all India could be brought under the British dominion, it is very questionable whether such a change, either as it regards the natives or ourselves, ought to be desired. One effect of such a conquest would be that the Indian army, having no longer any warlike neighbours to control, would gradually lose its military habits and discipline, and that the native troops would have leisure to feel their own strength, and, for want of other employment, to turn it against their European masters.' He concludes a long and able argument upon the question whether in the event of our conquest of the whole of India the condition of the people would be better than under their native princes, which he doubts, with this remark: 'There is perhaps no example of any conquest in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share in the government of their

country as in British India.' The only conclusion that I wish to establish from the preceding remarks, which contain indisputable truths, is that in the native army alone rests our internal danger, and that this danger may involve our complete subversion. But the fidelity of our native army, though wonderfully great and deserving of high confidence, cannot be considered exempt from the possibility of seduction, and thus an adequate European force is the sole security against this, the greatest evil that could befall us. What should be the proportion of our European to our native force will be presently considered.

The external danger comes next under review. The capability of the native army to meet it, and the manner in which the native military means of India can be turned to the greatest advantage, are subjects of the first magnitude.

As far as experience can teach us, the prospect is discouraging as to any great degree of direct and positive assistance in the field, that is in actual conflict, to be expected from the sepoy in a contest with the stronger and bolder races of Central Asia, with or without the co-operation of a Russian force. Mr. Holt Mackenzie has given an opinion upon the question before us, which quite coincides with my view of it:—

'My impression is that as far as regards any Indian enemy the native army may be considered to be very efficient. I am not equally confident of this efficiency if placed in any new and unusual position and exposed to encounter enemies that may possibly come upon us from without. I think the result of the war with the Burmese seems to show that when brought against enemies superior in physical strength to those with whom they have been accustomed to contend, and required to surmount obstacles of a different kind from what they have been accustomed to surmount, the native troops, however well led, will be found to want resolution and nervous vigour so as to be inferior to European troops in a degree not ordinarily to be perceived in Indian warfare. Consequently I should apprehend that if they were called upon to meet an European enemy in the north of India they might fail partly from the want of physical strength and partly from the want of moral energy.'

The defects of the native of India are want of physical strength and of moral energy. The first is beyond our remedy. It only depends upon ourselves to raise the latter to a much higher standard. Our system has, I fear, tended to depress it.

The late wars have brought the sepoy in contact with enemies of masculine character, and have shown the justice of the preceding opinion.

Sir David Ochterlony, in his confidential report to Government during the Nepal war, has recorded his opinion that the sepoys were unequal to contend with the Gurkhas in the hills.

The Burmese war was exclusively carried on by British troops. The Madras troops entirely failed. It is understood that Sir Archibald Campbell was strongly prejudiced against them, and when granting the request of their officers to be permitted to lead their men to the attack, he neglected the practice invariably adopted upon all other occasions of joining with them a

proportion of European troops. To this their ill-success may be in part owing. My own impression is also that in the short war against Coorg the Madras sepoys showed the same want of energy.

With respect to the inability of the sepoys to contend with a European enemy, the concurrent opinion of all the evidence, to which may be added the inference to be drawn from all our own conquests in India, seems to be decisive upon the question.

For my own part I am not quite disposed to come to the same desponding conclusion, because if the bolder and larger man of the north were mixed with a due proportion of European troops, and excited to acts of valour by sufficient encouragement, I know not why he should not acquire the same superior bearing as the Portuguese and the Neapolitans under British and French direction. But of the sepoys of the south of India, of those of the territories proper of Madras and Bombay, I entertain no such hope. Their case cannot be more favourably put for them than by supposing them to be Europeans, and to have all the advantages of the European character, and then let it be asked if men of such physical inferiority would be received as recruits in any European army, or if an army so constituted would not be considered perfectly inefficient.

All these facts and opinions seem to me to establish incontrovertibly that a large proportion of European troops is necessary for our security under all circumstances of peace and war. It surprises me to find how little attention was paid by the Committee to one of the most important parts of the inquiry, the relative proportions between the native and European force. But we fortunately possess the opinion of Sir Thomas Munro, the first of authorities, confirmed by another only second to his, that of Colonel John Munro, who filled the office of Quarter-master-General when I was at Madras. The opinions on both these questions are worthy of being noticed.

'The native troops are in an excellent state of discipline, but of course the Europeans are always superior to the natives. Question is, what should be the relative proportions of the European infantry to the native infantry? Answer: I should say one-third of European; that was the proportion observed at Madras,—indeed we have sometimes rather more, now we have considerably less.'

I once conversed with Sir Thomas Munro on that point, and he expressed his opinion very decidedly that there should be that proportion. This is also my opinion, but I think that it would suffice at present to fix it at one-fourth, being careful that the establishment should be always kept complete, and that on the most remote indications of danger it should be increased to one-third.

The statements annexed to this Minute show the actual proportion of Europeans to natives in the army of each presidency, and in the whole army.

The raising the European proportion to one-fourth would require an establishment of 28,171 rank and file. The present establishment of King's troops consists of twenty regiments of infantry and four of cavalry. The numbers wanting to complete amount to 1945 rank and file, and the effective strength consists only of 15,587 rank and file. The three European

regiments in the Company's service amount to 2429 rank and file. They exceed their complement. The total effective force, both King's and Company's, amounts to 18,016 rank and file, and the deficit required to complete the whole to one-fourth would be 10,155 rank and file, of which 8599 would be in excess of the present establishment, supposing the King's regiments to be complete and the Company's European corps reduced to their complement. In order to maintain the proportion of one-fourth in a state of efficiency, it is necessary to advert to the very great difference there is, and must always be, between the apparent and the real force, that is between the number of men actually borne on the rolls, and those if the regiment took the field who would be forthcoming. Many from the effects of climate must be left behind in hospital and quarters.

I called on Dr. Burke, the Inspector-General of Hospitals, an officer of great experience and intelligence, for an opinion of the deductions that ought to be made on this score. His answer gives 8 per cent for sick left behind and 4 per cent more for the effects of even a long march on a very short service. In order to keep up this one-fourth to its proper quota I think the establishment of rank and file should be fixed at 25,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry, and to effect it at the least possible charge I would raise each of our twenty-three regiments of infantry to 1000 rank and file, and add to our establishment two regiments of King's infantry. The cavalry, as I have already proposed in a former minute, should be raised to 800 rank and file, and the establishment augmented from three to five regiments, being 1000 men short of the force proposed.

I would station these two additional regiments of infantry and two of cavalry as follows—one of infantry at Bangalore, making three regiments at their station, which I consider as the most convenient position for a reserve, to be applicable to all exigencies in India; one regiment of infantry and one of cavalry to be placed in the great central cantonment, Rajputana, proposed to be established on the Beas river, and the other regiment of cavalry at Haiderabad.

In Rajputana there are above 10,000 native troops without any European force, which I consider to be highly objectionable in many points of view. This tract of country between the Narbada and Jumna, or rather Nagpur and Agra, is by far the most important in the whole line of our military occupation.

I do not feel called upon to suggest the means by which this extra expense shall be defrayed. My duty is performed in stating the imperfections of our present military defence and the measures that are necessary for the security of our empire. At the same time it appears to me that the reduction of one captain in every regiment of native infantry and cavalry may be made without any compromise of efficiency. When two companies were reduced in each regiment the former complement of officers remained unaltered. I consider the establishment of European officers in a native regiment to be far more than is necessary, and it is their number and high pay which swell to such an immense amount the military expenditure. Men differ very much as to the proper proportion, some contending that the

amount cannot be too great ; others, again, that the sepoy army was never in a better state than when there were not more than three or four officers with each corps. I am much inclined to be of this opinion. The connection between European and native officers was much closer, their dependence upon each other greater, and a more cordial intimacy existed between all ranks. I believe the sepoys have never been so good as they were in the earliest part of our career ; none superior to those under De Boigne, and at the present day none better than the Nizan's contingent, where the same proportion, I believe, about six officers, is maintained. There is one fact that is universally admitted, that no number of European officers will make a sepoy corps equal to an European regiment, and in my opinion that establishment would be sufficient that allowed the presence of one officer to a company. The saving proposed would go far to meet the charge, in addition to the changes that have been suggested in respect to the Bombay army.

There are two points adverted to in the reports of the Committee that are well deserving of early consideration.

Both the Madras Committee and the Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General of the Bengal army have recommended the augmentation of each native centre to 1,000 men, without any increase of officers, and I would strongly support its adoption as soon as the finances will allow. It would give great relief to the duty devolving upon all sepoy corps, which is often very harassing and distressing as military duty, and increased by the interference and interruption often caused to their religious customs. This increase would permit the extension of a much valued indulgence, that of furlough, to a much larger proportion of every regiment—say one-fifth, and for a longer period—say a year. I should think it would in any new general regulation be advisable to reduce the amount of pay received during absence. There is at this time a great difference of practice in this respect between the Bengal sepoys and those of Madras and Bombay, to the advantage of the latter.

The same Bengal officers have urged the formation of a portion of the regular regiments into light infantry. As there is not a single chief in India or on the frontier who can resist us in line, an army formed principally for that purpose is in a great degree useless. Within our territories all insurrection must be confined to hills or the jungles. Without we have either the Nepal Hills or the jungles and stockades of Ava, where soldiers well trained in irregular fighting and in the expert use of a light musket can alone be useful. I am of opinion that one cause of the defeat of the two columns in the late Coorg war may be ascribed to the ignorance of both men and officers in this species of warfare, which requires a particular and constant instruction as well as experience.

The irregular cavalry is the arm of all others in India that may be placed on a par with any of the military means that we could command for our defence against foreign invasion—not even excepting the European cavalry. I need not repeat what has been so often stated, that the Rohillas and all the other highest caste and bravest men in India who will not enter our ranks from dislike to our rigid discipline, and from the fear of personal disrespect from our young inconsiderate officers, have no repugnance to serve in the

irregular cavalry. The irregular cavalry is of peculiar importance in India. It is the favourite arm of the native. It attaches him to our service by the strong ties of interest and affection. It prevents his being engaged against us, and if the system were sufficiently extended it would, at a trifling expense, afford us all the advantages, moral and military, which the Russians have derived from the Cossacks, who, from being the bitterest enemies of Russia in the time of Peter the Great, have become the most faithful subjects of the empire. This force should be increased to 20,000 men.

- Steam power must be included among the most powerful means of reducing the difficulties of protection and support to such extensive and distant lines of defence and of multiplying the military resources that we already possess. In illustration of the practical use that might be made of this power, I take the liberty of introducing here an opinion that I have elsewhere expressed:—

‘But an efficient marine steam establishment in India is called for by considerations more powerful even than those of commercial advantage or improved political control. It would multiply in a ratio little understood the defensive means of the Empire. Let me advert to an event, the particulars of which are within your recollection, the Burmese war. If five powerful steamers had then been at our command to bring up in quick succession all necessary reinforcements and supplies, the war would probably have terminated in a few months, and many millions of treasure, many thousands of lives, and extraordinary misery and sickness would have been spared. Allow me to submit another estimate of advantage, of the correctness of which you all can likewise judge. The proper station for the principal reserve of our European troops in India is at Bangalore, Madras the place of embarkation. In a few days, at any period of the monsoons, the same five steamers would carry this force to the most distant part of the shores of the Empire. In five weeks with the aid of the river-steamers this reserve would reach Allahabad, the most central point of our territories, and one of our most commanding positions. The same steam power that would enable us to baffle any invader in war would be ample in times of peace to carry into complete execution the whole plan of the Bengal Steam Committee, for which I continue to be a decided advocate.’

I will only offer a remark that if such power be provided it should be exclusively appropriated to the transport of troops and to the maintenance of the communication with Europe. From all purposes of less utility—as passage or tug vessels—it should be interdicted as being uselessly expensive, and as affecting without any adequate return of benefit the efficiency and readiness for constant service of the steam machinery.

I shall only now take the liberty of suggesting the advantage that would accrue from including the military establishments of Ceylon in those entertained for the defence of our Indian Empire. Ceylon could well spare one regiment of infantry, which would be *pro tanto* a relief to her finances. For the ordinary duties of the colony a sepoy corps at one half of the expense would probably answer every purpose, and in case of more urgent service the regiment at Trichinopoli might be held at the disposal of the Government of Ceylon, and would be able to cross the straits in a very short time. The

and could move on to Ceylon in case of increasing urgency. There is a Malay corps in Ceylon, an element of defence not known in our Indian establishment, and which might be most usefully employed in our provinces on the Eastern coast, and perhaps in the Lower Provinces, which are so hateful to the up-country sepoy. If the experiment succeeded, this corps would afford a nucleus for the foundation of a larger force. It is a great desideratum in our military arrangements, the obtaining a mode of defence for Bengal proper at once efficient for the State and satisfactory to the individuals employed. I had much conversation with Sir Edward Barnes on the subject, I possess, indeed, a written memorandum from him strongly concurring in the view here taken, but I cannot immediately lay my hand upon it.

I regret that these observations should have run to such extreme length, but no one before me has had the opportunity of a season of peace to reflect upon the alterations that the union of our Presidencies into one Government, and of our territories into one Empire, imperatively call for. It would have ill become me, upon a subject so momentous as the safety of this great possession, to have been prevented by any motive of delicacy from the full development of my opinion. I fearlessly pronounce the Indian army to be the least efficient and most expensive in the world. The realisation of the hypothesis with which I started, of the presence of 20,000 Russian infantry on the Indus, with its accompanying multitudes, would now find us in a state utterly unable to resist them. The national resources at home might possibly rescue us from the impending ruin, but we must recollect that we are not likely to have again the same large armies to supply us with great reinforcements, and that men recruited for the occasion would be very inefficient and quite inadequate to bear the effects of the climate.

But even if we could command this aid, it would be utterly inexcusable if, with ample time for preparation, with the sum of ten millions sterling appropriated to our military establishments, we were not able to secure ourselves against every calculable danger "

N. L. CHATTERJI.

Side-Lights on the Character of J. E. D. Bethune.

MUCH is known about the life and work of John Elliot Drinkwater Bethune.

But the unpublished private papers of some of his contemporaries may yet throw some new light on him. Among these private papers, the personal diary of Lord Broughton (1), the President of the India Board, and of Lord Dalhousie (2), the Governor General, are significant. There are many letters of Bethune himself preserved among the mass of the papers of Broughton and Dalhousie, as well as copies of the letters written by them to Bethune. Interesting accounts concerning him are to be seen among the letters that passed from the President to the Governor General and vice versa. The letters of miscellaneous persons written to the Governor General and the President and the replies to those letters often speak of Bethune and his work. In this paper, it is aimed to get a glimpse of the man through some such accounts. References to his works have been avoided as far as practicable, except when the character is expressed through the work directly or indirectly. Emphasis had been given to reproduce the words of Bethune's contemporaries which concern him and speak of his personality.

Unlike many of his countrymen who coveted high offices in India, Drinkwater Bethune was not very anxious for an Indian job. It was "very much the wish of Lord John Russell", the British Prime Minister, and of Sir John Hobhouse (afterwards Lord Broughton), the President of the India Board, that "Mr. Bethune should be proposed for the place of Legislative Councillor." The President recommended Bethune's name to the East India House in the following words, "He is a gentleman of attainments universally acknowledged, and as much esteemed in private as in public life, who has been confidentially consulted by the Governments of Lord Melbourne and Sir Robert Peel, and Lord John Russell in devising the Acts of Parliament introduced by Ministers on the most important subjects of legislation ; and I can safely refer to those acquainted with his merits in order to satisfy you that he will do the greatest credit to your choice." (3)

Bethune, though informed earlier by Hobhouse about his appointment, did not give a reply. This put the President in an awkward position because the Court of Directors put up another candidate. He said to Bethune, "Your delay in giving me an intimation of your answer has been exceedingly

(1) The diary of Lord Broughton is open to the scholars in the Manuscript section of the British Museum.

(2) The diary of Lord Dalhousie is preserved at his own house at Colstoun, Haddington, Scotland.

(3) Home Misc.; Broughton Papers, Miscellaneous, Vol. 845, f. 332.

unfortunate, as other parties have proposed another candidate upon me who was not thought of when I first wrote to you. . . I beg you will write to me a reply, yes or no, in order that I may take some steps at once." (4)

Bethune finally agreed. But he agreed only when he got "the consent of his mother an old lady of 82." (5) "I am beginning to open my eyes in my new world", said Bethune on his arrival in India, "and to find that it is not so wholly unlike the old one as I expected." (6) Lord Dalhousie received him "most kindly" and he felt confident that he should be "on the best possible understanding with him" during his stay in India.

The President reminded Bethune after he received the news of his arrival at Calcutta, "I suppose that by this time you are well in harness and preparing to accomplish some of the objects which you had in view when we talked on Indian matters in London. It would be a feather in more caps than one if you were to cut the Macaulay Code into laws, and perhaps you might not find the task so difficult as at first sight it might appear to be." (7) But by this time Dalhousie had nominated Bethune to the office of the President of the Council of Education, and Bethune became much more interested in that work than in law making. Whatever work he did in his capacity of the Legislative Councillor, on each stage he annoyed the President.

Within a few months, Hobhouse said to Dalhousie, "We have been compelled to send you a despatch from the Court containing a reprimand to your colleague Bethune. It is inconceivable to me that any one in his station should write such minutes as he worded on the subject of the Marine Mutiny act. He is wrong in all his points ; but if he was right his language would be inexcusable." (8) On the same day, in a strongly worded private letter Hobhouse told Bethune. "You have thrown us all here into a most admired disorder by your minutes on the Marine Mutiny act. I can not imagine what could have possessed you to put such sentiments in such language on record. I am but a lay man myself and do not pretend to speak from my own judgment ; we flatter ourselves we have some very good lawyers at our command ; and I can assure you that no doubt is entertained of your being wrong in every one of the points which you have raised." (9)

From this time, the difference between the President in England and the Legislative Councillor at Calcutta began to grow. Bethune's work in the Council of Education equally displeased Hobhouse as his work in the Legislative Council. The latter thought that in the field of education Bethune was "in a minority of one" and said to Dalhousie, "It is a pity that he has started so unluckily, but I trust he will mend as he goes on." (10) Being

(4) Ibid, f. 334; Hobhouse to Bethune, 7 November 1847.

(5) Add. Mss. 43, 751, Diary of Broughton, Vol 8, f. 50.

(6) Home Misc.: Br. Papers, Vol. 855, f. 53; Bethune to President, 2 May 1848.

(7) Ibid, Vol. 859, f. 31; President to Bethune, 7 July 1848.

(8) Home Misc.: Br. Papers, Vol. 859, f. 43; President to Governor General, 24 August 1848.

(9) Ibid, f. 45; Hobhouse to Bethune, 24 August 1848.

(10) Ibid, f. 48; Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 1 September 1848.

misinformed about Bethune's activities, and without trying to verify anything, he warned, "... I can scarcely believe you could fall into an error so manifest, and fraught with such evil consequences." He reminded that his work "had caused no little disquietude" among his "masters at home" and called for "without delay, the requisite explanation." (11)

But on this point Bethune was innocent and the President's anger was for nothing. Lord Dalhousie defended his friend and wrote to Hobhouse, "Nothing of the nature of that which you mentioned ever to my knowledge came before the Government of India. I never heard of any difference of his with the Council of Education. From all I know of his sentiments I should have thought he would have objected to introducing Christianity into Public Education in India, and if he threatened not to attend the examination he must have changed his mind for I know that he did attend and took a great deal of trouble about them." (12) Criticising the President for his unjust censure, Dalhousie said to Bethune, "I said nothing to you about Hobhouse's remarks about the Council of Education because I did not wish to annoy you needlessly. . . . I wrote at once to Hobhouse to say that I was quite at sea—that I could not conceive what he was at—that I never heard of anything the least resembling what he alleged to have passed—and that he must be quite mistaken. I trust he will make a fitting apology to you." (13)

Hobhouse from his high position never made apology to Bethune, but Bethune from his subordinate position had to make it several times during his brief Indian career. He felt sorry for the strong words he had used in Marine Mutiny act and upon this the President said, "I have received your letter . . . and am glad to find that you kiss the rod like a good boy." (14)

Some times the President either ridiculed or pitied Bethune. "It is quite true, as you kindly remark", said one of the Directors of the Company to Hobhouse, "that what is written from a sick bed must not be too severely criticised; but I cannot help expressing my astonishment that in addressing you, he should have indulged in such sneers at a dispatch which he must have known could not have been sent to India without your approbation." (15) The President, in spite of apology from Bethune, said to Dalhousie, "Although I have letters from Bethune which, between you and me, convince me that he does not as yet quite understand his position. But he has been ill and allowance must be made for sickness and very hot weather." (16) To Bethune he showed his kindness, "I have not the heart to chide you and I shall only therefore say that I trust for the future there

(11) Ibid, ff. 51-2; President to Bethune, 7 September 1848

(12) Add. Mss. 36, 476, ff. 277-8; Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 20 November 1848.

(13) Dalhousie Papers, Letters to the Presidency, Dalhousie to Bethune, 11 January 1849.

(14) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 253, f. 84; Hobhouse to Bethune, 24 November 1848.

(15) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 852, f. 26; Lawford to President, 12 Dec. 1848.

(16) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 859, f. 91; Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 23 December 1848.

will be no pretext for any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of any of your sayings and doings." (17)

Bethune busied himself with his female school. Dalhousie at first did not believe that it would succeed, but to encourage Bethune he said, "I shall be glad if I can aid by means of Rupees that universal 'concrete' on which the foundations of everything in India rest." (18) From time to time the Governor General kept himself informed of Bethune's female school and encouraged him. "I truly believe that you have planted the grain of mustard seed ; and that it will one day be a great tree which you and those whom we serve may be proud to look upon", wrote Dalhousie to Bethune on 2 June 1849. (19) Within a few days he congratulated again, "Everything appears to look as encouragingly as you could expect ; and I heartily hope the project may become brighter every day." (20).

When the President got informations about the school from the Governor General, he replied "I am glad Mr. Bethune has recovered his senses. He is, I am persuaded, a very well-meaning man ; and, in all probability, will act right at last." (21) But very soon he got annoyed again when he heard about Bethune's proposed Black Act. "I have received your letter . . . and am sorry to find that you are in hot water again ; or rather that you have not yet got out of it ; for it seems to me that you have been more or less in that condition since your arrival in India", Hobhouse told Bethune. (22) About the female school he taunted, "I hope you have had your health. I see that the newspapers congratulated you on not having altogether laid aside the jovial habits of the profession." (23)

Bethune does not seem to have been at all perturbed by the annoyance of the President as long as the Governor General was on his side. Especially, as regards his female education, he carried Dalhousie with him. He made him to believe that his school was "one of the greatest works which has yet been commenced in India." (24) Bethune requested Lady Susan, wife of the Governor General, to visit his school and Dalhousie, according to him, "very gladly asked her to go to see it." (25) "She came back delighted", noted the Governor General in his diary, "It had been established only 10 months, there had been great opposition, yet inspite of it all there are now 34 pupils ; and 4 or 5 other female schools have been set up in other places near Calcutta. The progress they had made in female work, in reading and writing and even in writing English was very remarkable. An evidence of the latter will be

(17) Ibid, ff. 93-4; Hobhouse to Bethune, 23 December 1848.

(18) Dalhousie Papers, Letters to the Presidency, Vol. I, Dalhousie to Bethune, 11 January 1849.

(19) Ibid, 2 June 1849.

(20) Ibid, 23 June 1849.

(21) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 859, f. 216; Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 4 October 1849.

(22) Ibid, ff. 255-6; Hobhouse to Bethune, 25 February 1850.

(23) Ibid.

(24) Diary of Lord Dalhousie, 1850, Part I, From 2 March 1850.

(25) Ibid.

found among my papers being a letter written to Lady Dalhousie by the eldest of them in the name of the rest, in English, and hoping she would come and see them before she went away. It was a happy day for Bethune. Since then I have taken up the question of female education in Council and have directed that all female schools which may be started shall be taken under the charge of the Council of Education as well as the boys' schools." (26)

Bethune's proposed law in the mean time created a great sensation among the European community in India, and upon this the President told him, "When I last wrote to you I was not aware of the manner in which you proposed to carry out your views in regard to the trial of Europeans in the provincial courts; but having now seen your three acts, I am bound to tell you that your legislation does not appear well calculated to promote your object." (27)

The President did not forget to warn the Governor General about Bethune's conduct, and there upon Dalhousie noted in his diary, "Bethune is more able and more useful than most men: but he is of all the public men I ever saw, the most entirely devoid of judgment, and he gets himself and other people into sad scraps accordingly." (28)

Bethune was informal by nature. On account of over enthusiasm in his works, some times he did not strictly observe the official procedures and formality, and thereby annoyed his superiors. A good example of this is to be seen in the way he wanted to obtain the name of Queen Victoria for his female school. He approached the Queen through his sister who was an intimate friend of the wife of the Prime Minister who requested a lady in waiting to obtain the consent of the Queen. After this back-door method had been adopted, Bethune, without any serious consideration of the consequence, wrote to the President in absolute frankness, "You will see by the public letter that the Directors are asked to solicit the Queen to give her patronage to the Calcutta school, which has been the beginning of the movement. I wish to let you know that through the kindness of Lady John Russell (wife of the Prime Minister), with whom my sister is very intimate, I have already ascertained privately, that the Queen will probably accede to the request, if it comes home, as it will, sanctioned with the approval of the Governor General. The matter is really of considerable consequence to the social progress of this country, and is so considered here by the most intelligent natives. I have now to ask your good offices further in the same matter." (29)

On this issue Dalhousie wrote to the President, "Bethune is a man more entirely devoid of judgment than any body I ever knew, but very able and very useful too. . . He is anxious to obtain the Queen's consent, through the Court of Directors, to become Patroness of the first founded school. He told

(26) Ibid.

(27) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 859, f. 266; President to Bethune, 25 March 1850.

(28) Diary of Lord Dalhousie, 1850, Part I, From 19 April 1850.

(29) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 857, ff. 44-8; Bethune to President, 22 April 1850.

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me he was going to write to you on the subject and asked me to say to you that there are no objections. I see no objection here ; on the contrary it will do good." (30)

But the President by this time was tired "in regard to the working, or rather, non-working" of Bethune, and said to the Governor General "He has much disappointed me ; and gives as much vexation by what he does as by what he omits to do. If instead of framing black acts, he had been attending to the marriage bill, and to the unchartered Bank question, his services might have been useful. If he was not a well-conditioned, amiable gentleman, I could find it in my heart to send for him home." (31)

Thus when the angry President thought of Bethune's recall from India, he received his private letter about his approach to the Queen and retorted, "As to your female education scheme, I think you will find yourself embarrassed by seeking for royal patronage through any other channel than the President of this Board (Hobhouse himself) ; and I am much mistaken if Lord John Russell approves of such an unusual course. The Court of Directors have no means of communicating with the Queen except through the head of this office. . ." (32)

Bethune replied, "I must have expressed myself very ill, if I led you to think that I contemplated applying for the Queen's patronage otherwise than through you. Innocent as I am of much knowledge of official forms, I was well aware that it could be only through you that such a request could be granted ; but before making it in proper form, I thought that it would be prudent to endeavour to ascertain whether or not such a request, if made, had any chance of being favourably received. And this I tried to do through Lady John Russell, who is an intimate friend of my sister's, and who, I believe, consented to speak to one of the ladies in waiting, after consultation with Lord John. If I have done anything irregular in this, I trust you will attribute it solely to my excessive anxiety on the subject, and not allow the cause to suffer by the mistake of it's advocate." (33)

In the same letter, while advocating the cause of female education, Bethune reminded the President that "there are undeniable proofs that a spirit is awaking among the people which it would be shameful not to encourage." (34)

Before Bethune's letter had reached the President he wrote to Dalhousie, "He (Bethune) is a clever man—but he is far from a safe man of which I have but experience. You must make him attend to his duties and abstain from speculative law making—as also from recommending that the Queen should be asked to patronise his notions however praiseworthy they may be."

(30) Add. Mss. 36, 477, ff. 192-3; Dalhousie to Hobhouse, 23 April 1850.

(31) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 859, f. 284; Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 24 May 1850.

(32) Ibid, f. 297; Hobhouse to Bethune, 24 June 1850.

(33) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 857, ff. 124-30; Bethune to Hobhouse, 8 August 1850.

(34) Ibid.

It seems he has some mode of communicating with Lady John Russell, which may lead him into irregularities." (35)

On receipt of Bethune's letter, Hobhouse replied, "You must, I think, on reflexion, admit that to employ the services of a Lady in Waiting, for purposes of Government, is somewhat more suitable to the days of Mrs. Masham than to present time; and I feel sure that the same reflexion will convince you that any interference of that kind is much more likely to embarrass than to forward your projects." (36) In the same letter the President informed Bethune that the Court of Directors did not think it expedient to call in the Queen to his assistance and that he himself entirely agreed with them. With this news he taunted Bethune, "I hope you have your health in spite of all disappointments." (37)

The Governor General, who liked Bethune much, perhaps to please the President, said, "Bethune has been ill, I hear, at Calcutta. He likes schooling better than law-making; and all the Governors General together since Job Charnock will not make him to stick to the latter occupation." (38)

When Bethune received the disappointing letter from Hobhouse that they did not sanction the Queen's name to be used for his school, he gave a humble but brave reply. He said, "All your letters to me have been written in a most friendly spirit, yet I have been so far unfortunate that in almost every one of them you have had cause either to tell me that I had been going wrong in something, or to warn me at least of the danger of going wrong. I hope I kiss the rod with as much affectionate reverence as the sensibility of human flesh allows.

"In your last you taunt me with going back to the practices of Mrs. Masham days; and I believe I have already twice apologized for an error into which I was led by my extreme anxiety on the subject. I submit, because I must, to your decision; but I think you undervalue the importance of the agitation that I have begun on this subject of female education, and the immense assistance that any open declaration of favour from home would give me." (39)

Hobhouse really undervalued all of Bethune's works. When he heard about his illness, he wrote to Dalhousie, "If Bethune persists in doing nothing that ought to be done, and carving out idols for himself to play with and others to laugh at, it matters little whether he is ill or well. I am, as I believe I told you before, exceedingly disappointed in him." (40)

At this time the President got the news of Bethune's laying the foundation stone of the new building for the female school. "Your Legislative Coun-

(35) Dalhousie Papers, Letters From the Board of Control, Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 7 September 1850.

(36) Home Misc.: Br. Papers, Vol. 859, f. 329; Hobhouse to Bethune, 6 October 1850.

(37) Ibid.

(38) Add. Mss. 36, 477, f. 286, Dalhousie to Bethune, 23 October 1850.

(39) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 857, ff. 189-92; Bethune to Hobhouse, 23 November 1850.

(40) Dalhousie Papers, Letters from the Board of Control, Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 6 December 1850.

cillor, or some one for him", said Hobhouse to Dalhousie, "has sent me the Calcutta Morning Chronicle, which contains a speech of most prodigious length delivered by said Councillor on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the Hindoo female school: or as he calls it 'planting the tender saplin' of etc etc. 'These are innocent amusements, and I am glad he takes delight in them; but I hope he will not send his speech to the Queen or Lady John Russell.'" (41)

Before Bethune's work had caused further annoyance to his masters at Home, his career came to an end. Two days before his death, on 10 August 1851, Bethune made over his institute "to the East India Company with the expressive of a hope that they will receive and endow it in perpetuity as a Female school. . ." (42) At three o'clock on Tuesday, the 12th August, Bethune died. James Halliday saw Bethune "on the day before he died." He described to Dalhousie about "his calmness, courage and cheerfulness as admirable" and told that his female school was "the anxiety that lay nearest to his heart." (43) Dr. Mouat testified that "the intense and constant anxiety" of Bethune respecting his female school continued "up to almost the latest moment of his life and consciousness." (44).

Lord Dalhousie was then at Simla. There he mourned "over the news of poor Bethune most sincerely", (45) and said to Halliday, "Your estimate of poor Bethune is a just one. With all his foibles he has been a useful and valuable member of a community in which his stay has been so short, and we shall—as in most other cases—appreciate him best when we can no longer benefit by his aid." (46)

He again wrote to Sir John Littler, "Notwithstanding some failings Bethune has been of essential service to this country during the few years of his stay and was everyday becoming more valuable and useful." (47) A fairly long note in the personal diary of the Governor General speaks about his softness towards his late lamented colleague.

Dalhousie immediately took over the female school to himself. One of the motives behind his action was his personal affection towards Bethune. "Poor Bethune has left a blank which I shall fill", said Dalhousie, "There was a tie between us beyond the bond of red tape which had united us in England as well as in the East. His father was an old friend of mine—and thus we had feelings connected with the past in common, as well as more recent associations, objects and duties." (48)

(41) Home Misc.: Broughton Papers, Vol. 859, f. 353; Hobhouse to Dalhousie, 23 December 1850.

(42) Indian Home Consultations, 187/Vol. 37; Bethune's note delivered by Mouat, 10 August 1851.

(43) Diary of Lord Dalhousie, 1851, Part II, 24 August 1851.

(44) India Home Consultations, 187/Vol. 37, Mouat to Halliday, 27 August 1851.

(45) Dalhousie Papers, Letters to the Presidency, Vol. II, Dalhousie to Dorin, 19 August 1851.

(46) Ibid, Dalhousie to Halliday, 21 August 1851.

(47) Ibid, Dalhousie to Sir John Littler, 21 August 1851.

(48) Dalhousie Papers, Miscellaneous Letters to Various Persons in India, Dalhousie to Sir Lawrence Peel, 9 September 1851.

But there was Sir John Hobhouse, by this time Lord Broughton, whose attitude towards Bethune and his school was well known. To him Dalhousie gave explanations as to why he took up the school and assured him, "You may be easy in your mind, however ; I am not so ambitious as poor Bethune. I will not ask the Queen to be patroness. I will not even ask Lady Palmerston or Lady Jersey to be on the Committee." (49)

Lord Broughton did not think it proper to recognise the Bethune Female School as an institution of the Government of the Hon'ble East India Company, which was Bethune's "dying request", and wishing Dalhousie to maintain the school as a private person at his own expense, said, "What you and Lady Dalhousie intend regarding Bethune's Native Female School is very considerate, and as it appears to me, quite suitable to the occasion." (50)

MANMATHA NATH DAS,

(49) Add. Mss. 36, 477, ff. 483-4; Dalhousie to Broughton, 24 September 1851.

(50) Dalhousie Papers, Letters from the Board of Control, Broughton to Dalhousie, 8 November 1851.

Madras Commercial Records.

AN EXPERIMENT AT CUDDALORE.

THE scope of this paper is strictly limited. We should like, however, to start with a few brief and general comments which will indicate its proper perspective. The subject matter of the essay concerns an aspect of economic history. And it will be generally agreed that the first task of the economic historians of India to-day is to gather in as many data about the primary producers as possible. This particular task is also quickly assuming the shape of their most obdurate problem. A researcher in the 'modern period' is, in a way, fortunate in having copious and competent contemporary records to work on. (1) But the chief trouble with this sort of documents is that they seldom bring the researcher in contact with the people who are actually producing the commodities. A veritable Chinese wall of middle men interposes itself between the primary producer and the English merchant and hence also the researcher. One fruitful way of breaking through this barrier is to explore the records of the subordinate factories. But while records of presidency towns are plentiful, the subordinacies are almost totally mute. Thus, for an example, at the Calcutta Records Office no accounts of these factories can be traced. Fortunately for us the case is different with Madras. And I draw the attention of all researchers engaged in this line of inquiry to the wealth of materials lying at the Madras Records Office in the shape of 'Factory Records'. These records are almost totally unexplored.

Cuddalore was a subordinacy of Fort. St. George, the Coromandel H. Q. of the English East India Company. The Records of this particular factory begins from the year 1768. In the following pages I shall narrate the story of an interesting experiment in the technique of investment carried out by the Englishmen at Cuddalore. The experiment began in 1768 but did not end in 1772, at which point my own investigations had, unfortunately, to be broken off. Necessarily, the story remains incomplete but it will be found, I trust, to be revealing and suggestive. (2)

Before the year 1768 the Factory at Cuddalore had followed the usual practice of obtaining its investment of cotton piece-goods by advancing money to Indian middle-men who undertook to deliver the goods in time. This particular mode of investment had been, however, seen to be inefficient. The cloth delivered in by the merchants had suffered both in quantity and

(1) These are almost exclusively the accounts of the trading operations of European Companies.

(2) To avoid a superfluous series of footnotes I should like to state here that the material for this paper has been culled, except when specifically stated, from the Cuddalore Consultations 1768-72 R.O. Nos. 18430-18435.

quality. In the year 1768 Mr. Dowsett, a Senior Merchant attached to the Cuddalore factory, first conceived the idea of a direct arrangement with the weavers themselves.

Now, the English factory at Cuddalore had around it a limited expanse of territory which it administered directly. This part of its possession was always referred to by the Englishmen as 'these Bounds'. They had also a couple of adjoining villages—called Chinnamanaikpollam and Nedeput—ceded to them as jagirs. These they called 'the jaqueer villages'. And as these were settled predominantly with weavers Mr. Dowsett betook himself there to try out his idea.

The problem as he saw it was as follows:—"The high price of cotton at present, the profits made on it by different people before it comes into the weavers' hands added to the frauds of the weavers is undoubtedly the reason our cloth at present is of so inferior a fabric. . . . it appears to me that the weavers are entirely at the mercy of the thread brokers." Dowsett proposed to the weavers that he would like to employ some of them himself. He would supply the thread and they would work directly under him. "This proposal," Dowsett wrote in his report, "they listened to some day but continued putting me off from day to day with one frivolous excuse or other and held continued cabals every night. . . . At last one of the head weavers accepted the proposal so far as to engage to make me three corges of different assortments and received the amount (of thread) and said he would endeavour to prevail on the other head-weavers each to try it with a few looms appearing himself to be fully satisfied of the great advantages accruing to the weavers from the plan. The next day, however, the man came and acquainted me that the other head-weavers had been caballing the whole night and had threatened to turn him out from being any longer a head-weaver if he made a single piece. I then reasoned the matter with some of the heads of them but it was all to no purpose. They went so far as to tell me that they would work for the Company on no other terms whatever but the present footing of being employed thro' the merchants and brokers not even if I would give them double the Company's price. I should not have a single loom. That they would make the cloth of what fabric they pleased even six call. And if we did not like it they would carry it to Porto Novo. From this may be inferr'd how much these people are at the beck of our merchants and brokers—who must most certainly be at the bottom of these cabals".

An interesting statement signed by Audimoolum, the Amuldar of the Jaqueer villages, appears after Dowsett's report in the pages of the consultation. In this, after stating how the weavers declined Mr. Dowsett's offer, Audimoolum went on to add, "they then without either the consent or knowledge as well as contrary to the customs of the country either under the jurisdiction of the Circar or the Company, assembled all the weavers of both the villages in a Tope and there held a consultation and in the meanwhile sent some of their people to watch and hinder any others from interfering in their cabals. They then one and all came to a Positive Determination that unless the merchants and brokers advanced them the money they would not work

for the Company at all." The Amuldar, of course, was not present personally at these 'cabals' and based his statement on hearsay.

Whatever that might be, Cuddalore reached energetically to this report from Dowsett. In a general letter to Madras (17-2-1768) the case against the merchants and brokers was strongly put forward and the direct method of investment advocated. "From our frequent remonstrances," the Cuddalore Council wrote, "to the merchants without effect against the bringing in of bad cloth we observe no amendment in their future conduct may be expected for while they find it their interest to give insufficient cloth, they will continue to do it, if it is received and if we turn out what is inferior to our muster, we must discard every piece and the Company be disappointed of the investment or if we compelled them to discount for the cloth at this late day they would be so much distressed that none would probably be inclined to contract for the ensuing investment. . . . It may be laid down as an undoubted fact that the weavers in the two villages for some years past have been liable to be wrought up to cabals and to abandon their dwellings by the instigation of the merchants and their brokers tho' there has been no cause given for such violent proceedings (that we know of) on the part of the Company. . . . The investment has received frequent interruptions from the disturbances in the villages by which the quantity of cloth that might otherwise be obtained is greatly lessn'd and it is to be remarked that in the absence of the merchants at Madras when things went on smoothly these villages produced a much greater quantity than at any other period". But what caused this misbehaviour on the part of the merchants? On this point the Council was less explicit. "Of those looms in these bounds," they wrote "capable of weaving the Company's assortments by far the greatest number are employed on account of private merchants. This accounts in some measure for the exportation of cotton goods at Porto Novo amounting as we are told to two or three lakhs of pagodas yearly". The point was not elaborated. But whatever the misbehaviour might have been due to, it had to be checked. As to this the Council proposed three things: the exclusion of the merchants from 'these Bounds' and 'the jaqueer villages'; a direct arrangement with the weavers in these parts; employment of the merchants in the adjoining territories taking care to confine them to separate articles of cloth so that they could not form any cabals. (3) By excluding the merchants from Cuddalore and the villages not only would the output in this region be increased but "they would be obliged to provide cloth in the Chillumbrum and other countries now wholly abandoned to our rivals the French and others by the inactivity of our merchants". And by advancing money directly to the weavers "should any abscond they may be recalled as Company's debtors and being divided into small sums will not be more risque by their insolvency than by that of the merchants".

(3) This method was widely employed by the English against the Indian merchants. Thus, for an example at Anjengo, a subordinacy of Bombay, Nella Chitty was engaged for supplying fine cloth while the coarse varieties were allotted to other merchants. Vide Anjengo Consultations 1743-47 (printed).

Bourchier and his Council at Fort. St. George accepted the plan and ordered the exclusion of the merchants and brokers. Cuddalore went promptly into action. "Being aware that difficulties might be thrown in our way by the merchants and their brokers if time was allowed them to form schemes of intrigue and opposition, we directly ordered all the head weavers to attend us. We then declared to them that they were now freed from any contrall of the merchants and the brokers and were taken immediately under the care and direction of the Subordinacy; that we well knew abundance of cloth had been sent out of their villages to the French last year and that they had been ill advised to abandon their dwellings on trivial occasions; that, however, as these things were now past, we purposed to hold them in oblivion and that nothing was intended them but for their benefit and advantage since we meant to give them the investment on terms the merchants had it last year, whom (sic) we knew obliged them to work considerably cheaper but that we expected the cloth would be improved in proportion to the difference in the price; that after such reasonable overtures whoever dissented must do so thro' obstinacy and therefore we peremptorily demanded who the man was that dare refuse to work for the Company. They stood silent for sometime and then declared they were willing one and all to work for the Company". (To Madras 31-3-1768). The Englishmen at Cuddalore were, however, aware that by thus thrusting an engagement upon the weavers they had not won the battle. As a matter of fact the battle was just begun. The course of the actual struggle we shall be able to watch for a few years. But what is more important for our purpose is the condition which made for the struggle. What really were the difficulties which stood in the way of English investment? On 28th October 1768 the Cuddalore Council sent in an able analysis to Madras on this point. The first difficulty was, of course, competition. The English Company wanted a monopoly. But they were not prepared to pay the price for it. The last thing they would do would be to outbid their rivals in fair trading operations. Of course the Cuddalore Council could not put it just in so many words. But they came very near doing it. "Our contiguous situation to Pondichery and Porto Novo we find to be a great damage and hindrance to it (the English investment) because the French at the former and the Dutch and black merchants at the latter pay much greater prices for their cloth than we do nor are they so exact as to the fabrick or the lengths and breadths as we are; this we do not assert from hearsay but from well ascertained accounts we have received from both places, likewise from the many and repeated complaints from our own merchants of the brokers they had employed having broken their contracts on account of higher prices being offered them for cloth from these places, also of the facility our merchants meet with in selling our turned out cloth to them whether rejected for the badness of fabrick or shortness of measure for a great or higher prices than what our Company pay them for what is taken in seems to be a corroboration of the assurances. (4) An

(4) This competition was certainly no new thing. It had been a headache for Cuddalore for a pretty long time: vide Fort St. David Consultations 1740 (printed), particularly consultations dated 29-2-1740 and 27-12-1740.

investment carried on against rivals under these disadvantages must certainly in time without some counterpoise dwindle away." The 'counterpoise' of course was the ubiquitous 'exclusive privileges' to be got from the Nawab which the Council went on to suggest a little later.

The second difficulty was that the Company wanted the price of cloth to remain fixed. That is to say they hated an increase. But the price of cotton fluctuated greatly. The Company were not prepared to take any notice of the increase in the price of cotton but this made the position of the weavers impossible. The trade in cotton was a vital aspect in Indian commerce. The thread brokers had a strangle hold over the weavers. But of this later. Suffice it here to note that Cuddalore proposed to Madras that the English take over at least that part of the cotton-trade which would be sufficient to meet the requirements of their own weavers. Madras turned the proposal down.

The third difficulty which confronted Cuddalore is for our purpose of major significance. It concerned the internal tax-structure of the country specially in so far as it affected the weavers. This problem was discussed in the letter of the 28th October and also in a subsequent letter dated 26th December 1768. Unfortunately the analysis presented is far from clear and at times difficult to follow. Extensive quotations, therefore, may well be confusing. I shall try to summarize the analysis with as much clarity as can possibly be achieved.

Three types of taxes were collected from the inhabitants of Chinnamanaikpollam, Nadeput and the Cuddalore Bounds. These were (a) the Juncan, an excise duty on all sorts of commodities, (b) a loom-tax which was levied on every single loom, supposedly for protection and (c) a tax on grain-lands. The Cuddalore Council repeatedly pointed out that the first two types of taxes affected the investment but the third did not. There is, of course, always the chance that in this view they were mistaken. But so far as Cuddalore was concerned this was the view on which they acted. (5)

The Company did not directly assume the duty of maintaining law and order in these places. There were a headwatchman at Chinnamanaikpollam, a pollygar at Nadeput and a pollygar at the Cuddalore Bounds. These people naturally took a substantial share of the taxes; (6) the rest went to the Company. The Cuddalore Council also referred to demands by the 'Circar officials' which the inhabitants of the Jaqueer villages had to meet. The basis and the extent of these demands cannot be determined.

The most lightly taxed were the people of the Bounds. The taxes which they paid amounted ultimately to 1 fanam and 60 cash per corge for the weavers. The difference between this and that paid by the Jaqueer villages was spectacular. There the weavers paid 27 fanams 27 cash per corge. "This

(5) The only reference to the connection between the weavers and agricultural occupation that I have as yet come across occurs in Fort St. George Consultations 1742 (printed). In the consultation of 17th March it is recorded that weavers dissatisfied with the returns from their looms "chose rather to work in tillage".

(6) The figures would be as follows: total takings of Nadeput Pollygar (about) 360 pagodas—77 Juncan, 131 loom tax and 154 grain land. Total for Chinnamanaikpollam watchman 110 pagodas—48 Juncan, 42 loom tax and 20 grain land.

difference is so striking that it appears a sufficient inducement to draw all the weavers into these bounds. But the necessities of life are much dearer here than in the villages which is a drawback to such apparent benefits." On the other hand, since the abolition of the middlemen the Company had been paying two or three pagodas per corge more to its own weavers; why, then, was there no influx of weavers from the 'Circar' country into the Jaqueer villages? The reason was precisely the high taxes. It can be seen from this that in this region at this particular point of time there was a very nice adjustment between the advantages and disadvantages of a place which kept the weaving population stationary.

From this study of the situation the Cuddalore Council came to the conclusion that a unified administration for the three places would be beneficial. They also urged a scaling-down of those taxes which affected investment. In this connection they wrote, "we conceive the loom tax is a great impediment to the increase of weavers and consequently to the investment because it falls entirely on the Cooley weavers who being a poor indigent people are very ill able to pay any. We therefore think that they in particular ought to be exempted from it except to the Pollygar for watching duty because these are the people most wanted to fabricate the cloth."

This much of the conditions under which the weavers worked emerges from the analysis of the Cuddalore Council. A more intimate description is, however, supplied by William Chambers who was sent to the Jaqueer villages as the Company's Resident after the failure of Maitland and Ross to manage the new mode of investment. Of this 'failure' I shall speak presently. Now [it is necessary to know as much about the background as possible] we are concentrating on the background which in this case is more important than the events themselves. And this was what Chambers wrote: "As the inhabitants of the villages are numerous and the bulk of them exceedingly poor, their sole dependence is upon the labour of their hands and that labour is strictly confined to the service of the Company. When fully employed they can weave 6000 pagodas monthly and if this be not advanced them as their cloth is delivered they must either be idle or starve or fly to some other resource. That now there are in the villages gomashas of the thread-merchants in the Circar Country who are kept there on purpose to make their advantage of such emergencies. To these the weavers apply when they have no supply of cash from the Company and necessity obliges them to comply with any terms those men are pleased to prescribe so that they take the worst thread at an exorbitant rate and mortgage the cloth they are about to weave for the payment of it. That if the Company's advance come in time they pay for the thread and redeem their cloth; if not, the thread merchants claim it as their own and undoubtedly convey it away. . . . When . . . bad cloth is redeemed and brought into the factory their case is then hard for it is in all likelihood cast upon their hands again and they must then instead of putting fresh cloths into the looms go to dispose of it, perhaps, at some distant market. That if it be turned out at the Warehouse they are under a double hardship for they are required to receive at a forfeit of 10 p.c. When they have not bread for the sustenance of the families this sometimes induces them to sell their

children and the penury thus incurred brings on an emaciated imbecility far different from that healthy vigour which would enable them (to) do justice to the manufactures." The Council at Cuddalore conceded the substantial accuracy of Chamber's statement but added the dry comment: 'the Resident listens too much to their (the weaver's) complaints.'

The situation being such it is perhaps a little surprising that the new mode of investment did not run into immediate trouble. The first outburst came only on May 7, 1771. On that day the weavers of the two villages put an entire stop to all their work and "assembled together in a tumultuous manner. The Resident and Tassaldar (7) sent for the head-weavers and asked them their reasons for such extraordinary behaviour. They replied—that in the former Warehousekeeper's time their best cloth used to be taken in to No. 1 and such as was of an inferior fabric to No. 3 after making an abatement of 10 p.c. and that he used to deliver to them all the cloth that was short of measure to be disposed of to other merchants. That this year the gentlemen sorted their best cloths to No. 3 and returned the rest upon their hands which proceeding rendered it impossible for them to fullfill their contracts and maintain their families. That if the gentlemen would be pleased in future to take in their cloths from No. 1 to No. 3 and to deliver to them all the short of measure they would agree to go on with the Investment."

The Chief of Cuddalore and the Warehousekeeper went to confront the weavers on the 9th of May, 1771. The weavers repeated their complaints. The reasons the weavers advanced struck these officers as "frivolous". The Chief told them to go back to work. He was gracious enough to add "that they might depend on always having justice done to them when they had any real cause of complaint." The weavers were, however, in no mood to take so much of justice lying down. They "after two days of caballing so far from being disposed to return to their business seemed resolved to do everything in their power to carry matters as they pleased—that unless all their bad cloth was accepted of on their own terms they would do no business for the Company. They carried their licentious spirit so far as to threaten to leave the villages and absolutely to refuse a peremptory order from the Board evidently tending to the advantage of the weavers in general viz. the Resident's sorting all their cloth to prevent any being sent to the Warehouse unfit for the Company's use." The principal weavers were then asked to attend the Board. "The Board by means of the Tassaldar having got information of nine of the ringleaders in these disturbances think it highly proper to make public examples of them. Ordered that they be punished, which is done accordingly (13 May 1771). The other weavers being asked separately whether they will return

(7) It is difficult to determine what the position and functions of this officer were. I am inclined to think that the Tassaldar and the Amuldar were one and the same person and was an Indian in charge of the Company's investment in the villages. He had, previously, a share in the investments himself when his interests were identical with that of the weavers. Either immediately preceding or directly with the establishment of the new mode he had been divorced from this particular function. He was also placed under the Resident. He was, therefore, now to be found telling the Council how the weavers cheated them and to what extent.

to their duty and obey such orders as they may from time to time receive from the Board, they do agree to return to their looms and in future willingly to do their duty. But as a security for so doing the Board order them to be confined till they send their orders to the weavers in general to open their looms and till such time as intelligence is received that the weaving of the investment goes on in a proper manner." This crushed the first out-burst. After it Maitland who had been the first Resident was replaced by Ross.

But this appointment meant further troubles. According to the view taken by the Cuddalore Council Ross became involved in a quarrel with the Amuldar. For reasons we have already noted the Amuldar was unpopular with the weavers. And now Ross incited them against that officer. A second strike followed in which the weavers put forward the oppression of the Amuldar as one of their grievances. The Council at Cuddalore lost faith in Ross and sent back Maitland to try and pacify the weavers. But at his approach the weavers fled. They communicated their determination not to return till the Amuldar had been recalled. Madras was informed in detail about the situation. As a result both Ross and the Amuldar were withdrawn and William Chambers took up his duties as the Resident.

Now, the Company came forward with a new proposal. They offered to supply the weavers with thread through agents of their own and thus keep the price of cloth fixed. This the weavers absolutely refused. They preferred the old mode even at one or two pagodas a corge less. Cuddalore noted with regret that "these people seem to have imbibed a most malicious spirit of opposition which added to the consideration that several of them are either thread-brokers themselves or connected with thread-brokers, the introduction of the new system so evidently advantageous to the commonality of the weavers naturally strikes at the former's advantages which they (are) resolved to endeavour to preserve" (Cons. 11.7.1772). The 'malicious spirit' was sought to be countered by the tested method of imprisoning the head-weavers.

The same story unfortunately repeated itself in the Bounds. And in this case Verdachellum, a head-weaver of Bandepollam, "twice withheld from punishment on a promise of compliance" was singled out and punished in full view of the other weavers and then was expelled from the Bounds to the beat of Tom Tom. The weavers of the Bound were now separately asked to submit to the Company's terms. They capitulated. And so did the head-weavers of the villages who had been witnesses of these proceedings in their confinement. But with them things went hard. They were released but the Company decided to abolish the privileges of head-weavers and carry on the business of the investment with the weavers themselves.

The developments which took place after this remain at the present moment untraced. It is, however, necessary before we close to add one or two comments which will minimize the danger of hasty conclusions being drawn from what has been said above.

The first point which I should like to make is that these Consultations never give a full picture of the situation. The most important aspect which they suppress is the private trade of the Company's servants. The nature and extent of this trade are absolutely vital in understanding the actual position

of affairs. Some idea of these can be obtained from sources other than these Consultations. Thus, for an example, the career of Dowsett (who set the ball rolling with his report) as a private trader can be traced in the pages of the private letter books of Francis Jourdan. These letter books along with many others of a similar nature can be found among the Mayor's Court Records preserved at the Madras Records Office. As a result of the complete suppression of all data regarding their own private trade the gentlemen of the Cuddalore Council were constrained to leave a few loose threads dangling in course of their narrative of what happened. Thus, the cause of the quarrel between Ross and the Amuldar remains a provoking question.

The second point which should be clearly grasped is the limited nature of what has been said. There is, as yet, no reason to think that this 'experiment at Cuddalore' ever transcended its local boundaries. Certainly it does not suggest a major reversal of the Company's mode of investment in the coast comparable to the dropping of the Dadni merchant in Bengal in 1753. (8) And even the duration and the final outcome of this experiment are yet to be worked out in detail.

(8) Cf. Dr. N. K. Sinha's article on the Investment Policy of English East India Company in Bengal Past and Present. . . .

THE LETTER BOOKS OF FRANCIS JOURDAN

FRANCIS Jourdan was a servant of the English East India Company and resided mostly in Madras. (1) As a servant of the Company he never rose very high. Even in 1778—which was just a few years before his death—he was not known to the Governor of Madras personally. (2) But as a private trader he was a man of considerable importance. His letter books—some twenty-seven in number—have been preserved among the Mayor's Court Records at the Madras Records Office. In these his career as a private trader can be traced in detail and they reveal incidentally a vital aspect of European commerce at that time. In what follows I shall be concerned only with the years 1767-69.

First we should note the extent and magnitude of Jourdan's trading operations. These were such as necessitated his residence in Madras. In reply to a suggestion from Quentin Crawford of Masulipatam that he (Jourdan) may be transferred from Madras, Jourdan wrote: "I have considered the matter well and doubt much whether I would accept of any place out of Madras, for I am situated much to my liking. I have the management of the Minerva and with it whenever the Manila trade shall be reopened the provision of the goods. I have the conducting of the Achin trade in which this next year I shall have a concern of 20,000 pagodas. I like many in Madras but there are few I would chuse to leave my business with. I trade on a considerable sum of money. At a subordinacy I must contract my views very much and if it shall only amount to this that my profits on a certain sum will be equal to a greater sum at Madras why should I leave Madras for a less agreeable one?" (15-3-1768). This extract should give us a general idea of Jourdan's position. It is possible, fortunately, to be more specific.

Thus, for an example, we can consider the types of voyages which Jourdan undertook himself or in which he shared. The Four Friends which was under Jourdan's management, sailed for Batavia on 22 April 1767. She took chintz and piecegoods. At Batavia she was to take in sugar, span wood, sugar candy and sawn planks. Then she was to proceed to the west coast of Sumatra 'to Bencoolen and the northern ports'. She would be likely to meet the Middlesex 'from England to China'. From her the Four Friends would get cordage canvas, iron etc. fifteen p.c. cheaper than the Madras price. On her return the Four Friend would leave either for Persia or for Pegue (to Q. Crawford 9-5-'67).

(1) It is difficult to say when he came out to India. The earliest trace of him can be found in the *Manilha Consultations*. These began from 1762. At that time Jourdan was sent as an assistant to the storekeeper to Manilha. He came back in 1764. Towards the end of his career he was transferred from Madras to Masulipatam. He died in the early years of the 80's.

(2) Cf. Dodwell's *The Nabobs of Madras*, p. 136, Dodwell seems to have read some of Jourdan's letter books. But since his interests were elsewhere he gave them no importance.

The Indian Trader was scheduled to leave for Achin in April, 1767. She sailed a few weeks behind her schedule and carried a cargo of sixty chests of opium and various types of piece-goods. Her itinerary included Achin, ports on the Sumatra shore, Quedah and finally a visit to the Salengorians. (3) She returned in April 1768.

On May 12, 1767 Jourdan wrote to R. Crawford in Bengal about a different type of voyage. "As I can scarcely think," he wrote "a China voyage will answer next year as so many have taken that track I have thought of another voyage which promises much greater advantages which is from Madras to Cochin China or Tonguies then to Canton where parts of a Cargo for Persia must be purchased, there to return to Cochin China . . . where she may get sugar much cheaper than in China and a good quantity of the proper sort of Agala wood. She should leave the latter place in January and proceed to Anjingo (on the Malabar Coast) where she may dispose of some articles proper for the Malabar Coast take in pepper and such piece-goods as we might think proper to send to that place for her. She should then hasten on to the several ports in the Gulph (Persian Gulf) and in her return call at Surat for cotton."

A little more detailed information is available about a voyage when Jourdan sent some goods on freight by a ship called the Chesterfield under Captain Duff. "As you have been obliging to offer," wrote Jourdan to Duff "to take charge of some goods we have provided for Persia which the owners of the Union refused to receive on freight, we have taken leave to add a few (goods meant for) Batavia and now trouble you with the following directions regarding them. . . . On your arrival at Batavia if you can get for us above 16 p.c. more than the amount of the invoice, freight, risque, interest and commission and the goods to be delivered on board of ship we beg you will dispose of them at such price rather than run the chance of another market." Bales marked B containing goods not very proper for Persia can be sold at Batavia for a 10 p.c. profit (net). The rest are to be carried to the Gulf. At Muscat all these are to be disposed of and no more chances of a market further up be taken. The price, of course, must cover the outlay. If this even cannot be obtained they are to be consigned to Mr. Boroyer at Bussier or if the worst comes to the worst carried back to Bombay where they will fetch at least 20 p.c. on the Madras price which will just about clear the liabilities for this particular voyage incurred by the 'Concerned'. (Letter dated 12-3-1767).

There is no doubt that Jourdan's operations extended to the coast of China. It is, however, a little difficult to find out how exactly this branch of his trade was carried on. Writing possibly (4) to R. Crawford in Bengal, Jourdan stated "This year two ships have already been dispatched from your port for China and they will be sufficient for your market. Ours is always supplied

(3) For a discussion of the importance of Quedah and the Salengorians in the trade to the Malaya Straits cf. my article *Trade in the Straits*.

(4) These letters are frequently undated and inscribed without any address and the addressees have got to be found out through internal and other evidences.

by the Maeao ships which are sail'd so much cheaper than those that are navigated by our people that the owner(s) will ever have it in their power to undersell us" (7-3-1767). From this it would appear that the shipping for Jourdan's China trade was not in his own hands. He was, however, contemplating the purchase of a big vessel for this trade (to R. Crawford 28-2-1767). He intended to place it under Robert Crawford's management (to R. C. 7-3-'67). But it does not appear that in these years he effected this particular purchase.

Apart from China, the Straits of Malaya and the Persian Gulf, Jourdan had regular trading relations with the ports of Burma, particularly Pegu. The ship *Minerva* under Jourdan's exclusive management was frequently employed in this line. He was also largely concerned in the coastal trade of India itself. During the years under consideration this branch of his trade was badly hit by the war between the English and Haidar Ali. There is not the slightest doubt as to the bad effect this war had on Jourdan's coastal trade. The letter-books are strewn with lamentations about it. Here I shall quote only his sentiments when the war actually closed: "Hyder is at the Mount," he wrote to Holford "and it is imagined we shall have a peace by tomorrow night. As a merchant I shall feel the good effects of it. As an Englishman I am greatly concerned when I reflect on how different a figure we now cut from what we did in 1759, 1760 and 1761 (31-3-1769). Immediately after the war ended there was scarcity of rice at some places of the coast and Jourdan adroitly turned the scarcity to his own good advantage (the details of this rice trading are given particularly in his letters to Stevenson at Cuddalore).

It is clear from what has been set forth above that Jourdan was no isolated individual trader. On the other hand the days of the Agency Houses were still in the future. The organization of which Francis Jourdan was a part represented a form intermediary between the two. (5) For the management of his voyages Jourdan co-operated with individuals living scattered from Batavia to Muscat. This co-operation took two distinct forms. First, there were people who jointly shared in the initial outlay of a voyage. Second, there were men who helped in the progress of a voyage without actually sharing in it. There was, of course, no water-tight division between these two. The same men who were actively interested in one voyage might be mere well-wishers in another and vice versa.

The ship *Four Friends* was purchased jointly by Jourdan, Quentin Crawford, Monkton and the notorious Paul Benefielde (To Crawford 28-2-'67). Benefield was also concerned in several other similar purchases of these years and he shared in the Achin voyage of the *Indian Trader*. The goods intended for Batavia which were transported on board the *Chesterfield* were owned jointly by Quentin Crawford, Paul Benefield and Jourdan. There are various bits of similar evidences about joint undertaking of voyages.

It should be noted, however, that this 'joint undertaking' of a voyage

(5) Attention has already been drawn to this transitional organizational form by Dodwell in his *Nabobs of Madras*, pp. 126-133. But he has refrained from giving us the details which, I believe, are necessary and called for.

was often far from being a simple and straight-forward transaction. To cite only one source of complication : a man may undertake to share in a particular voyage in his own name but he, personally, may have nothing to do with it and may act as an attorney for somebody else. This device of acting through an attorney was particularly suitable to those highly placed officials of the Company whose participation in business was frowned upon by the Court of Directors. (6) But this made the situation exceedingly complex. The nature of the effect can be studied in a letter Jourdan wrote to somebody who had apparently been his attorney for some time : "As you will perhaps hear I have joined in consigning my share of the copper (referring to a shipment of copper from Madras to Calcutta) bought with Mr. Benefield to Messrs. Russell and Killican, it will be necessary for me to acquaint you that Mr. Benefield being largely concerned in the Achin voyage as also in the vessels intended to be bought as well as that which is bought (the Four Friends) and his attorney not having been at all employed herein he apprehended might take umbrage. These with other circumstances I cannot at present repeat to you has obliged me to leave you out in this but you may be assured, my dear Sir, my intentions are that you shall always act for me and those for whom I act as attorney and that the difference will be more than made up by future consignments." In a postscript Jourdan added with the pride of the virtuous "Had I chose to have been disingenuous you could not have heard I was concerned. It might have gone in Mr. Benefield's name. But I love to be open in my actions" (the letter is undated but must have been written between the 24th and 27th of February 1767).

The more interesting aspect of the organization was the network of correspondents Jourdan had at various places. It supplied, as a matter of fact, the basis on which depended the success of the various voyages. Some of Jourdan's correspondents to whom repeated references have previously been made can now be enumerated. At Batavia Jourdan had one Mr. Burnet who died in October, 1767. In Bengal there were Claud R. Russell and Robert C. Crawford. At Masulipatam Robert's brother Quentin Crawford was a very great friend of Jourdan's and took prominent share in several of his voyages. Dowsett looked after the business at Cuddalore. In March 1769 Dowsett's fortune crashed. He went bankrupt and as his attorney Jourdan was entrusted with the task of winding up his affairs. Dowsett was succeeded by Stevenson as Jourdan's Cuddalore correspondent. Excepting Mr. Burnet these men were all servants of the English East India Company. There were two other persons (and not one as suggested by Dodwell) among Jourdan's correspondents who were not in the Company's service. They were Gowan Harrop the supercargo of the Indian Trader and Captain Holford who resided at Negapatam. Jour-

(6) In this connection the following observation of Dodwell seems to be based on insufficient data : "In the old days the principal merchant had been the governor and the next largest the members of the Council. But at the end of the century none of these had anything to do with trade.... the control of trade had really been transferred from the covenanted servant to the free merchant", *ibid*, p. 126. I am inclined to think that all that had happened was this that the forms of trading operations had become more complex and more elusive.

dan's business dealings, however, embraced a wider range of people. But of that later.

At the present moment we should glance at the things actually done by this 'organization'. Chiefly Jourdan relied upon these people to do two kinds of services. First, the goods intended for the various voyages had to be procured. And second, general informations about the state of the different markets had to be collected. Thus for example Dowsett was asked to purchase chintz and piece-goods for the voyage of the Four Friends to Batavia (To Dowsett 8-1-1767). Captain Holford at Negapatam was instructed to purchase opium for Jourdan's agent at Malacca (To Holford 8-4-1768). Such illustrations can be multiplied. But that seems scarcely necessary. The other aspect of the organization's work will, perhaps, be more interesting. Here I shall quote only one extract from a letter written by Jourdan to R. Crawford in Bengal. "As much depends," wrote Jourdan "in voyages of all kinds but particularly in those to the Eastward on advices from your place I shall take it as a great favour if you will constantly give me notice of the vessels destined to the straits and of the quantity of opium supposed to be exported thereon. It will likewise be of great consequence to me to know the price of Europe indeed Indian commodities at your place as often as any change occurs and particularly whether there is a probability of the rise and fall of any from the tranquility or commotions up the country" (13-1-1767). In reply to this Crawford supplied Jourdan with some statistics about vessels sailing for the straits of Malacca which proved very valuable (To R. C. 31-3-'67).

That was the 'organization' of loosely-knit individuals brought together by an accidental unity of self-interests with which Jourdan conducted his business. He had, however, dealings with various other types of men. Thus for example he traded with both the Portuguese and the Dutch. In the letter-books covering the three years 1767-'69 there is only one reference to his commercial dealings with a Portuguese (To Q. Crawford 12-5-'67) but references to the Dutch are more frequent. It does not appear from Jourdan's books that there was any clash of interests between the Dutch and the parties he represented. The voyage of the Indian Trader to Achin achieved a moderate degree of success inspite of French hostilities largely because a very great part of the chintz could be disposed of to the dutch (To Holford 15-3-1768). When the English East India Company banned all export of cloth to the northward in November 1768 Jourdan immediately thought of the Dutch as a means to get round these orders. "If the cloth be made up in Dutch factories," wrote Jourdan to Quentine Crawford "I do not see what our chiefs can say to that" (undated). Again in May 1769 Jourdan engaged in a commercial transaction with the Governor of Tranquebar (To Stevenson, undated).

A very vital aspect of Jourdan's operations must have been his relations with Indian merchants in general and Indian money-lenders in particular. That he was constrained to apply to them not infrequently cannot be doubted. "When I was at Cuddalore I borrowed five hundred pagodas of Inhopa Chitty. Be pleased to take up my note." This to Dowsett on 24 Feb. 1767 can be regarded as a typical example. But data on this score are not so plentiful as to allow a fuller statement.

And now we shall turn to another aspect of Jourdan's activities. From what has been said above it may be inferred that Francis, in plying his business, might have regretted the imperfections of his 'organization' but had no cause to complain about frictions from any other source. This certainly was not the case. Jourdan had plenty of things to worry about. His operations threw him into contact with all sorts of people and not all of them were reliable. Thus for an example he had once an occasion to deal with the celebrated Mr. William Bolts—and had cause to regret it. "I am uneasy at Mr. Bolt's behaviour," he wrote to Robert Crawford "Should he take it into his head not to answer my bills? What may be the consequence?" (18-4-'68).

A second difficulty was that all his correspondents were men like him—engaged in private trade. At times their interests could not but clash. "The Chank (?) trade," Jourdan wrote to Robert Crawford "would undoubtedly turn out very advantageous to me if I was judge. But Holford who resides at Negapatam and is well acquainted with this trade has entirely monopolised it" (31-3-'67). This same Holford once was involved in a voyage which caused Jourdan much anger. "I am the more urgent to you not to lose a moment," wrote Jourdan to Captain Gibson "as Captain Holford, Mr. Johnson and others (which included Bouchier the then governor of Madras) are setting on foot a voyage which in all probability will interfere with us and of course much depends on you getting away first" (13-5-'67). And to Holford himself "I am sorry to acquaint you that a resolution Mr. Johnson has taken of sending Mr. Gossilns in a vessel you lately purchased with opium etc. to whatever ports he pleases is very likely to hurt our voyage. I am too deeply concerned not to be very much vexed at it" (13-5-'67).

References to Bouchier are frequent in Jourdan's pages. Apparently he operated on a scale large enough to Cause Jourdan anxiety on several scores. For an example Jourdan could scarcely think of purchasing a ship without taking into account the price Mr. Bouchier was liable to offer. And in these biddings Bouchier appears to have been the more substantial customer (Jourdan to Harrop 6-1-'67 and Jourdan to R. Crawford 28-2-'67). The ship Madras Merchant which Bouchier owned was a constant source of worry for Jourdan and he had to watch its activities with care. Thus: "when the Four Friends shall return (from Batavia) she may as I before wrote you proceed to Persia unless Mr. Bouchier shall send his which is called the Madras Merchant in which case should ours go the market would be spoiled for both. Should this happen I would recommend her to be sent to Pegue (To Q. Crawford 9-5-'67). This, of course, did not mean a relationship of set hostility and there was an occasion when Jourdan and his friends sent goods on freight by the Madras Merchant and reaped a handsome profit (To Monkton 10-11-'68).

It seems that in the Achin trade Jourdan had a rival in one Casamaijor of Nagapatam. Towards the close of 1769 there was some sort of an understanding between the two. "As a competition in trade," wrote Jourdan to Casamaijor "is always attended with this inconvenience that you buy your goods dear and sell cheap nothing could be more agreeable to me than the information I received from Capt. Holford of your desire to make our concerns but one. I have long seen the advantages that will occur to us both and as

soon as I am informed of your return to Nagore I will immediately pay you a visit to agree on the terms that may be proper for us (27-7-'69).

There are certain things about Jourdan's activities, however, which cannot be understood from a perusal of these letter-books alone. One obviously is Jourdan's position as a trader as compared to others in the same avocation. (7) A second is the relation between the Company and this private trade. We have already seen Jourdan's attempt to get round the ban on cloth export. Another suggestive extract may be noted. "The draft in favour of the Commissary Gov. need not be so very exact as the overplus of the stoppages if any remain after the clothing is paid for is to be delivered in to the Company's cash and this is never examined by any persons whatever—but even supposing the strictest examination it will be no difficult matter for Mr. Smith to order the Sepoy pay rolls up—for the accounts having been passed, the vouchers will hardly be called for. Could I have procured Madras pagodas or rupees I should not have thought of this method but as they are not procurable I must depend on you" (To Q. Crawford 22-2-'67).

A third thing which to my mind was extremely vital is also exceedingly elusive. This was the debt of the Nawab of Arcot and the part played by it in Jourdan's fortunes. The subject is complex and Jourdan's entries about it—and there are quite a number of them—fragmentary and cryptic. I have thought it inadvisable to attempt a reconstruction on such slender basis.

ASIN DASGUPTA.

(7). In this collection of letter books there are in all about one hundred bundles. Much light, I believe, can be thrown upon this particular problem by an examination of letters written by other traders.

increase, as the rain crop has failed, in consequence of the dry heat in June, and the excessive and continual rain in July. I am not aware of any unusual excitement or bad feeling in the district. . . . (4)

The district of Purnea lying midway between Bhagalpur and Jalpaiguri had been unlike Monghyr or Bhagalpur affected by a mutinous rising. The mutiny of the 73rd Regiment of Native Infantry and of a detachment of the 11th Irregular Cavalry, stationed at Jalpaiguri, spread alarm in Purnea, which eventually came to be a scene of some disturbance, when the mutinous regiments of Jalpaiguri made for Purnea to encounter an opposition of Mr. Yule and his army there. Mr. Yule saved Purnea by his timely arrival there with the detachment of 50 men of the 5th Fusiliers, withdrawn from Bhagalpur and by driving the mutineers into Nepal. Eventually they made their way into Oudh. (5)

The lately tranquillised Sonthal Parganas were not also free from unrest and excitement at the commencement of the mutiny. In July 1855 the Sonthals had risen in arms in protest against the extension in their district of the Railway system, they distrusted, against the extortion of 'mahajans', the corruption of the 'amlas' and the oppression of the Police. Some offence was also alleged to have been offered to one of their women. (6) It was due to the negligence of the 'Sahibs' (i.e., the Europeans), it was held by the Sonthals, that they were subjected to such unjust treatment at the hands of tax-gatherers, money lenders and Bengalee zemindars. 'Fanaticism mixed itself up with these feelings; one of their leaders announced to a great concourse that he had seen the Godhead descend in the shape of a cartwheel; after which two pieces of paper had fallen on his head, ordering the extermination of the offending classes.' (7) The insurrection that began came to be quelled by General Lloyd by the end of 1855. Closely following to the heels of the Sonthal insurrection came the sepoy mutiny casting its shadow on the Sonthal Parganas. But the Sonthals of the Sonthal Parganas did not appear to have been aggressive at this stage. In a letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on the affairs of Sonthal Parganas on 21st June 1857 the officiating Deputy Commissioner, Sonthal Parganas wrote thus: ' . . . as far as the Sonthals are concerned there are not in my opinion any grounds for apprehensions. . . . I am constantly conversing with the Sonthals themselves and I do not believe that they have any other wish than a good season for their crops. In what state the sonthals about Runeegunj and towards Pachete and Hazaribagh are, I

(4) Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, Part II of 1857-58 paper No. 79, page 95. It is learnt from the narrative of events for weeks ending on 24th and 31st October 1857, submitted by the Govt. of Bengal to the Court of Directors of the E. I. Co., through the Governor-General of India that the price of rice was still very high in the districts of the Bhagalpur division and was expected to rise still higher to the great suffering of poor classes unless rail and ferry fund works were carried on, on an extensive scale, so as to give them remunerative employment.—Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons) Vol. 44, part III of 1857-58. Further papers No. 7 in continuation of No. 5 relative to the minutes of east Indies, page 26.

(5) District Gazetteer compiled by O'Malley—Purnea. Page 52.

(6) Ludlow, Vol. II, page 205.

(7) Ludlow, Vol. II, page 205.

cannot state, as I know nothing of them but at present I do not see any cause to fear a disturbance either in the Damunikoh (Dumka) or any other portion of the Sonthal Parganas. . . . (8) But it was not all quiet on the Sonthal Pargana front. The activities of the 5th Irregular Cavalry caused a great disturbance in the district. Reporting (9) on the intriguing activities of the 5th Irregular Cavalry the Commissioner of the Sonthal Parganas wrote to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on 16th July 1857 that about half past eight on the night of the 12th ultimo while Major Macdonald, Sir Norman Leslie and Dr. Grant of the 5th Irregular Cavalry, stationed at Rohini, in the Sonthal Parganas were sitting together in front of the mess bungalow, a sudden rush was made at them by three men with naked swords. Sir Leslie was disabled at the first blow and he died very shortly. Major Macdonald and Dr. Grant escaped with serious wounds on their person. These three men were definitely ascertained to have belonged to the 5th Irregular Cavalry, were caught hold of and sentenced to be hanged. The incident was indicative of an organised conspiracy in the regiment. There was a temporary lull which came to be broken when the 5th Irregular Cavalry mutinied at Bhagalpur in August 1857. The mutineers marched on to Rohini where they were joined by their comrades of the regiment and after having extorted 12,000 rupees from the rich inhabitants of the place marched in a body towards Deoghar and Bausi, the Head Quarters of the 32nd Native Infantry. From both of these places the mutineers were kept off by the loyalty of the 32nd Native Infantry. This Regiment rejecting all advances and promises of increased pay and promotion in the service of the King of Delhi stood firm and was much appreciated by Government. (10) Moreover the military authorities of Bausi as also of Deoghar could learn of the approach of the mutineers beforehand and kept themselves in readiness to meet them. The inevitable happened. The mutiny of the 5th Irregulars came to be arrested. 'The Deoghar mutineers after advancing as far as Wazeerganj in the direction of Gaya suddenly turned to the north, entered Thannah Atta Serai in the district of Patna and thence moved rapidly to the west, crossed the Trunk Road to the south of Jahanabad and the Sone at Mahatullupore near Urwul. Thence they proceeded by the neighbourhood of Puroo, by Rupsagar and Dhunsolee, towards the Karumassa. (11) Their destination was known to have been Rewah. This body of mutineers was led across the country by Goodhar Sing who had formerly acted as a guide to the 5th Irregular Cavalry in their passage through Behar. (12) As in other cases the rising of the Deoghar mutineers, away from their station, came to be finally crushed. A cavalry-troop of the 5th Irregulars was posted

(8) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, Part I of 1857-58 (House of Commons), paper No. 364, pages 273-274.

(9) Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, part I of 1857-58 paper No. 364, page No. 272.

(10) Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, part I of 1857-58 paper No. 363, page 51.

(11) Letter from the Commissioner of Patna to the Secretary, Govt. of Bengal, dated 31-10-1857. Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, part IV of 1857-58 paper No. 67, page 8.

(12) Ibid.

at Dumka but the precautionary measures of Mr. Shyamalananda Mookerji sub-assistant Commissioner at Nya Doomka saved the area from any mutinous outbreak. Having good reasons to suspect the fidelity of the troopers of the 5th Irregular Cavalry at that station the officer sent the treasure amounting to Rs. 4,000/- and the few prisoners in the jail to Suri. The judgment, coolness and discretion exhibited by him in somewhat trying circumstances were much appreciated by Government. (13) The Sonthal Parganas came to be freed from mutineers in course of time. The departure of the 5th Irregular Cavalry from the Sonthal Parganas left the district all quiet and peaceful. In consideration of the honesty, courage and fidelity of the sonthals Government made a plan of raising a corps for police work in their own district from that tribe. 'Their hardihood, activity, capability of withstanding the influence of climate, simplicity of habits and other qualities rendered them, in the opinion of Government, excellent materials for such an experiment. But their caprices and impatience of control made it necessary in the considered judgment of Government to commence the experiment with caution and to conduct it through the agency of an officer known to, and confided in by the sonthals. Their pay was decided to be not less than five rupees a month and no deductions were to be made from it on any account. They were to be enlisted for short periods in the beginning and were to be armed with a light rifle and their own battle axe. It was proposed at first to raise a small force of about three companies from among the sonthals of the 'Damuni Koh' (Dumka) and to ascertain which of the same tribe in the Chota Nagpur Agency promised to be most eligible for enlistment.' (14) Two hundred sonthals (15) were initially enlisted for military service, as authorised and sanctioned by the Government of India.

The hilly division of Chota Nagpur was widely stricken with mutiny. In his statement on 'The mutinies as they affected the lower provinces under the Government of Bengal, 1858'. Mr. Frederick Halliday recorded that 'during the whole period of the outbreak the division of Chota Nagpur had been a source of anxiety and uneasiness and from time to time of embarrassment and difficulty and even of actual danger. In fact no division in the whole of Bengal had been subject to such continued disturbance as this Province.' (16) The division contained several petty states which were once independent. The rulers of these states 'were glad to try to profit from the existing turmoil. As a consequence the rebellion throughout this division was almost general.' (17)

The military position of the Chota Nagpur division at the commencement of the mutiny was such as to invite troubles at an early opportunity. Various stations of Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Purulia, Chaibassa and Sambalpur, as already stated, were occupied by detachments of the Ramghar battalion which was

(13) Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, part I of 1857-58, Paper No. 363, page 47.

(14) Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, part I of 1857-58, Paper No. 363, page 52.

(15) Home Public Consultations, 30th April 1858, No. 28.

(16) Quoted in Buckland's Bengal under Lt. Governors, Vol. I. Page 98.

(17) Kaye and Malletson, Vol. VI, page 35.

formed of native recruitment, and was composed of all the three branches of Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery men. Its loyalty was supposed to depend on the fidelity of the regiments at Dinapur. Besides the detachments of the Ramgarh battalion, detachments of the 7th and 8th Native Infantry were stationed at Ranchi and Hazaribagh respectively. Though Ranchi came to be cleared of the detachment of the 7th Native Infantry even before any outbreak occurred, the artillery portion of the Ramghar battalion there, distrusted even by the Commanding Officer, continued to be a source of trouble and anxiety to Government. (18) Hazaribagh was a more dangerous zone for Government than Ranchi. Garrisoned by detachments of the Ramgarh Battalion and of the 8th Native Infantry Hazaribagh contained a treasury with upwards of a lakh of rupees in it and two jails containing 900 prisoners. (19) Troubles began at Hazaribagh in the wake of the mutiny at Dinapur. The two companies of the 8th N.I. on duty at Hazaribagh knew nothing of the Dinapur mutiny until it was communicated to them by Captain Drew through the Native officers. (20) The intelligence of the occurrence of a mutiny at Dinapur produced a sympathetic mutinous fever among the two detachments of the 8th N.I. at the station. They broke into revolt apparently at about 1 P.M. of 30th July 1857 shortly after which the station was abandoned by all the officers in it. (21) The mutineers at once busied themselves with works of destruction. They knocked off the irons of the prisoners and incited them to escape. They burnt some bungalows and plundered the treasury. The activities of the mutineers disturbed the minds of the people much. The mutineers and convicts after plundering Hazaribagh proceeded in the direction of Ranchi by the Pittoria (Pithauria) Road. (22) They thus avoided meeting Lt. Graham who was sent from Ranchi with a detachment of the Ramgarh Light Infantry with two guns to disarm the two Companies of the 8th N.I. at Hazaribagh. The Hazaribagh mutineers turned off from the Pittoria ghat, finding it well guarded by the Pergunnait, Jugut Pall Singh who had been directed to watch it carefully and proceeded to another ghat to the West. It might be they intended to proceed to Sambalpur under the guidance of 'Sorunda Suhoe' (Surendra Saha?), who was sentenced to imprisonment for life for rebellion in Sambalpur. (23) The detachment of the Ramgarh battalion under the command of Lt. Graham proceeding to Hazaribagh also mutinied on the road on hearing of the rising of the detachments of the 8th N.I. and joined the latter, then on their way to Ranchi, at Burmu. The combined forces then marched towards Ranchi "with the avowed hostile intentions against the British Officers there". Captain Dalton meanwhile reoccupied Hazaribagh and busied himself with restoring normalcy there. After the stay of a month or so in Ranchi the mutineers moved westward to meet Kumar Singh

(18) Frederick Halliday's statement—Buckland, Vol. I, page 99.

(19) Frederick Halliday's Statement—Buckland, I, page 99.

(20) Home Public Consultations, 14th August 1857, No. 25.

(21) Home Public Consultations, 14th August 1857, No. 25.

(22) Home Pub. Cons., 14th August 1857, No. 22.

(23) Home Pub. Cons., 14th August 1857, No. 22.

(24) Dist. Gazetteer—Hazaribagh, page 68.

near Rohtasgarh. Though opposed by loyal zemindars they marched through Chandwa and Balumath in Palamau to the town of Chatra. At Chatra the mutineers suffered a serious defeat at the hands of a small force of 320 men and had to escape in the direction of Sherghati. (25)

A significant episode of the mutiny at Hazaribagh was a rising of the Sonthals. Unlike the Sonthals of the Sonthal Parganas those of Hazaribagh availed themselves of the mutiny of the Sepoys at the station to rise against the oppressive money-lenders and incidentally against the Government too. Joined by the local bad characters, they took to plundering such areas as Kuju on the Ramgarh road and Jharpo near Bagodar. At Mandu they were instigated by three local landholders to commit murder and to plunder the village.

It is learnt from a letter dated 16-9-1857 from the officiating Commissioner of Chota Nagpur to the address of the Secretary, Government of Bengal that early in September 1857 'a large body of Sonthals had after plundering several villagers surrounded the house of a relative of Ramgarh Raja at Jharpo, 14 miles from Hazaribagh on the road to Bagodar. Lt. Graham was sent out with a party of his sowar and 16 sikhs. He found the plunderers about 200 or 300 encamped on a rising ground near Jharpo, cooking. They immediately discharged a flight of arrows at Lt. Graham's party and wounded some of his men. The sikhs and Cavalry then charged and dispersed them, killing some ten or eleven and wounding more and taking three prisoners and restoring to the villagers a quantity of grain etc. that had been plundered. Lt. Graham then returned to Hazaribagh. The prisoners freely confessed that under the orders of Roopoo Manji they had been for some time engaged in plundering.' (26) The Sonthals were not properly organised and were accordingly easily defeated into submission. There was besides another class of people, the dispossessed 'Bhuiya tikaits' (Chiefs) who also rose into mutiny in the wake of the Sepoy rising for recovering their lands from the purchasers, then occupying them.' (27) This rising also was early controlled.

It does not appear that the Sonthals or the 'Bhuiya tikaits' (Chiefs) had collaborated with the Sepoys in arms. The non-military classes in Hazaribagh excepting the sonthals, the dispossessed Bhuiya tikaits and a very small number of local Zemindars like those of Mandu were generally speaking favourably disposed towards Government during the mutiny. Such Warlike races in and around Hazaribagh as 'Chowars', 'Coormies' (Kurmies), 'Coles' (Kols) and others joined the Indian army and fought for Government. These races possessed the peculiar virtue of never siding with the enemy of those to whom they once swore allegiance. When the Hazaribagh mutiny was in progress and the mutineers came into the temporary possession of the Grand Trunk Road and the Jhonklumdie Road passing through the district a suggestion was made to Government by the then Additional Principal Sudder Ameen of the 24 Parganas, Rai Taraknath Sen for raising some forces from among the warlike races of Chotanagpur. (28) In fact shortly after the suppression of the mutiny at Hazari-

(25) Dist. Gazetteer—Hazaribagh, page 68.

(26) Home Pub. Cons., 25th Sept. 1857, No. 95.

(27) District Gazetteer—Hazaribagh, page 69.

(28) Home Pub. Cons., 14th August 1857, Nos. 28, 29.

bagh it was decided to raise a levy of Kols and Sonthals for Military police and a body of 500 of the more ardent aboriginals was enlisted for this work. (29) Besides this the Government had in its service from Katulpore, a thana in West Burdwan, to Hazaribagh nearly 10,000 fighting men, recruited from amongst the Ghatwals, Taleedars, Jagheedars and others who were paid by land both by Government and the Zemindars for rendering services to the state, whenever required. (30) The Zemindars were on the whole loyal. "I learn", wrote Capt. Dalton in his letter from Hazaribagh on 6th August 1857 to the Secretary, Government of Bengal "that the mutineers have not as yet been successful in inducing any influential persons of the district to join them. They invited Thakoor Bishnath Sirkar of Barkurghur to be their leader but he refused; they next offered the post to Lall Oopundernath Sirkar, the nephew and heir presumptive of the Maharaja of Chota Nagpur, but he declined to act, referring them to his uncle. Of all the landholders of Chotanagpur these two were the most likely to have joined them and it is said the mutineers are much discouraged at their invitations to them having been rejected and much puzzled and divided in opinion as to their future plans." (31) It is however gathered from other sources (32) that "Thakur Bishnath Sahi of Barkagarh who had long been regarded as disaffected openly joined the mutineers and was reported to sit daily in one of the Cantonment bungalows, administering justice. He also assisted the mutineers by cutting several breaches in the road over Ramgarh ghat with the obvious intention of making it difficult for troops advancing against Doranda, . . . Thakur Bishnath Sahi was hanged in April 1858." It might have been that Thakur Bishnath's mutinous turn was a subsequent development.

Like Hazaribagh Ranchi had been a centre of disturbance during the mutiny. At the commencement of the mutiny Ranchi was the Head Quarters of the Ramgarh Battalion which consisted of a full infantry battalion, with Cavalry and Artillery attached. The battalion was composed of recruits from Chotanagpur, Bihar, and other parts of India. Two companies of the Ramgarh Infantry with thirty horsemen and two guns had been sent under Lt. Graham to disarm the mutinous Sepoys at Hazaribagh. But on the way to Hazaribagh they themselves rose in arms on receipt of the news of the actual mutiny of the Hazaribagh Sepoys, took possession of the guns, ammunition and carriage including four elephants, Graham's private property and in defiance of the lieutenant's orders marched back to Ranchi along with the Hazaribagh troops whom they met at Burmu, twenty miles north of Ranchi. The Cavalry, however, remained loyal and proceeded with Lt. Graham to Hazaribagh. Capt. Dalton and a few other European Officers who were then at Ranchi left for Hazaribagh, when they felt unsafe to continue staying in Ranchi. While Dalton reoccupied Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Doranda (33) temporarily passed under the control of the mutineers. In restoring order in Hazaribagh Capt.

(29) Dist. Gazetteer—Hazaribagh, page 69.

(30) Home Pub. Cons., 14th August 1857, No. 29.

(31) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, Part II of paper 79, page 241.

(32) District Gazetteer—Ranchi compiled by Mr. G. Hallett, I.C.S., pages 42 and 43.

(33) While Ranchi was the civil station, Doranda was the military Cantonment. The one was separated from the other by a distance of 3 or 4 miles.

Dalton obtained valued assistance from the Raja of Ramgarh. The Raja placed at his disposal some 40 or 50 armed men. 'Of the Ramgarh Raja's loyalty there could be no question.' (34) Meanwhile the mutineers after a short stay in Ranchi for a month or so left the station and, as already stated, proceeded towards Rohtasgarh to meet Kumar Singh there. Finally they marched through Chandwa and Balumath in Palamau to the town of Chatra. (35) Before leaving Ranchi 'they behaved in the most brutal manner to the townspeople, plundering, torturing and violating their women. . . . They burnt all the officers' bungalows, the lines etc. A bungalow belonging to Dr. Brougham was the only one left standing. The Principal assistant's cutcherry (court) and jail were also burnt by the Sepoys, and the records destroyed. They left 50 sick in hospital and this building was in consequence left standing.' (36) The mutineers also beheaded an old native doctor, Boodoo, attached to the jail. The departure of the mutineers paved the way for a return to normalcy at Ranchi. Order was soon restored at that station to which Dalton returned on 23rd September 1857.

The mutineers received very little support from the civil population in Ranchi. Most of the leading Zemindars stood by the Government. Among the few Zemindars who stood against Government mention may be made of Ganpat Rai of Bhaunro, an ex-Dewan of the Maharaja of Chotanagpur. He was formally installed by the mutineers as their Commander-in-Chief. (37)

Closely connected with the mutiny at Hazaribagh and Ranchi was the mutiny at Palamau through which the mutineers of the former stations passed on their way to join Amar Singh. The mutiny at Palamau assumed a serious character. Nilambar and Pitambar, the two sons of the deceased Chief of the tribe inhabiting the territory between the high lands of Sirguja and the low country of Palamau were given the estates of their father in Jagir with a nominal quit rent. The mutiny at Hazaribagh and Ranchi encouraged them to strike a blow for complete independence. In alliance with the chero Zemindars they openly declared themselves against Government and against the loyal Rajput Jaigirdars, Thakurai Raghubar Dayal Singh and Thakurai Kishun Dayal Singh, the former's Cousin. Late in October, 1857 a force of about 500 Bhogtas along with others of Kharwar class and a body of Cheros under the leadership of Nilambar and Pitambar made an attack on Chainpur, Shahpur and Lesliganj. (38) Towards the end of October disturbances of a serious nature were reported by the Commissioner of Chota Nagpur to have broken out in Palamau. A large number of cheros and Kharwars plundered the towns of Shahpur and Chainpur and the body 500 Bhogtas pillaged Lesliganj and other

(34) Capt. E. T. Dalton's Report on the Mutiny in Chotanagpur.

(35) District Gazetteer—Hazaribagh, page 68.

(36) Letter from Capt. Dalton to the Secretary, Government of Bengal, Home Public Consultations, 25th September 1857, No. 94.

(37) District Gazetteer—Ranchi, page 42.

(38) District Gazetteer—Palamau, edited by L. S. S. O'malley, I.C.S. (revised by P. C. Tallents), page 36. Cheros and Kharwars were the two tribes of which the population of Palamau was mainly composed. The Kharwars again were divided into several classes of which the principal one were the Bhogtas. Ibid, page 35.

villages and committed some murders. At the attack on Chainpur the insurgents who were about 2,000 strong were dispersed by Thakur Raghubar Dayal Singh against whom their movement was stated to have been mainly directed on account of old enmities. At Lesliganj the Government 'thana' (Police station), 'Abkaree Cutcherry' (Excise Office) and a few houses belonging to private individuals were burnt, but on hearing of the advance of Lt. Graham, then officiating as junior Assistant Commissioner in the district, with a small party of troops the insurgents retreated into the jungles and hills of Sirguja. The various Zemindars according to the statement of Lt. Graham had to all appearance kept entirely aloof from these outrages. (39) The Commissioner of Patna intimated to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal in a letter dated Patna Nov. 12, 1857 that the tribes called 'Cheeroo' (Chero) and 'Kharwar' were said to be in arms to the number of 5,000 or 6,000 and to be attacking the Zemindars. They were burning and pillaging in all directions. (40)

By the end of November and the first week of December 1857 nearly the whole of the district of Palamau was apparently up in arms. Lt. Graham was besieged by a large body of the insurgents at Chainpur. (41) One of the principal insurgents was Debi Baksh Rai who came to be captured by the force, sent under Major Cottor to relieve Graham. Graham was relieved and the mutineers had to withdraw from Chainpur consequent on the capture of Debi Baksh Rai. Their attack on Ranka fort proved unsuccessful because of the opposition of Kishun Dayal; but they burnt the village of Manka, near Palamau fort. By the first week of January 1858 affairs in Palamau were reported to have taken a favourable turn for Government. The withdrawal of the principal Chero Zemindars from the insurrection tended to diminish and dishearten the insurgents who were reported to be deserting in numbers. (42) The Palamau fort came to be rescued from the mutineers by Dalton and Graham together, the former having personally started for Palamau on 16th January 1858. The mutineers left the Palamau fort leaving guns, ammunitions, cattle, supplies and baggages behind them. (43) The baggages left behind contained letters to Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi and Naklout Manjhi as also communications from Amar Singh, promising immediate assistance from Kumar Singh. (44) Besides Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi and Naklout Manjhi there were some other leading insurgents such as Tikait Unaras Singh and his Dewan Sheikh Bhikhari. The Tikait Singh and his Dewan were executed. (45) Capt. Dalton and Lt. Graham followed up this victory by occupying the Bhogta Country and the village of Chemu on the banks of the Koli, the principal residence of the insurgent brothers. This village as also a fortified house of theirs situated in it were afterwards destroyed, as was destroyed Sunnya, the residence of the insurgent Bhogtahs; but Nilambar and Pitambar could not

(39) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, part IV of 1857-58. Paper No. 67, page 123.

(40) Ibid, page 136.

(41) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, Part IV of 1857-58, Paper No. 67, page 334.

(42) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, Part IV of 1857-58, Paper No. 67, page 347.

(43) District Gazetteer—Palamau (compiled by O'malley, revised by P. C. Tallants).

(44) Ibid, page 38.

(45) Dist. Gazetter—Palamau, compiled by O'malley (revised by P. C. Tallants).

immediately be captured. Meanwhile there was a fresh flare-up of mutinous activities in the middle of March 1858 under the leadership of Ganpat Rai and Bishnath Sahi both of whom, however, came eventually to be executed. Even Nilambar and Pitambar Sahi came to be captured and hanged to death. With their execution the district was tranquillised. Jagirs came to be granted to Thakurai Raghubar Doyal Singh of Chainpur, Thakurai Kishun Dayal Singh of Ranka and Bhikhari Singh of Mankah in recognition of the services rendered by them to Government during the mutiny. (46)

If the mutiny at Hazaribagh and Ranchi had its shadow cast on Palamau, it had its repercussions felt on Singhbhum also. The chief town and administrative Head Quarters of the district of Singhbhum was Chaibasa, which like other stations in Chota Nagpur was garrisoned by a detachment of the Ramgarh battalion. The news of the mutiny at Hazaribagh and of the sympathetic revolt of the two detachments of the Ramgarh battalion, sent from Ranchi under Lt. Graham to disarm the Hazaribagh mutineers, threw Chaibasa into a state of excitement. The Principal Assistant Commissioner, Captain Sissmore, in charge of the station thereupon left it and took shelter with the Raja of Saraikella, (47) Chakradhari Singh. After the abandonment of Chaibasa by Capt. Sissmore the detachment of the Ramgarh Infantry, stationed there, mutinied. Persuaded in the beginning of September 1857 that the British Raj was at an end, the mutineers plundered the Government treasury, broke open the jail and attempted to join their comrades at Dorunda. Their escape, however, was rendered almost impossible by the exertions of the neighbouring zemindars who had caused all the 'Ghats' in their zemindaries to be closely watched. A large body of Coles had also assembled and kept them in check. (48) The mutineers' march towards Dorunda was arrested also by the flood of the river Sanjai and by the Hos (a caste in Singhbhum) 'who gathered in thousands, cut off all stragglers and harassed them continually'. (49) The baffled mutineers of Chaibasa came to be assisted by Arjun Singh, the Zemindar of Porahat in the district of Singhbhum who considering the opportunity favourable to gaining an ascendancy in the district entered into negotiations with the Chaibasa mutineers and gave them shelter against Government resistance. He was even reported to have proclaimed himself Ruler of the country. (50) On 16th September 1857 Lt. Birch who had been appointed in place of the Principal Assistant Commissioner reached Chaibasa with the Rajas of Saraikella and Kharsawan. Lt. Birch's arrival at Chaibasa at this time was most opportune, for he found the Coles on the eve of swearing allegiance to the Porahat zemindar under the impression that the British had abandoned the country. At first they could hardly be persuaded that Lt. Birch

(46) Dist. Gazetteer—Palamau, page 40.

(47) Head Quarters of the Saraikella State, situated on the Kharkai river and Chaibasa-Purulia Road, six miles south of Sini. Dist. Gazetteer, Singhbhum, Saraikella and Kharsawan, edited by L. S. S. O'Malley, page 248.

(48) Home Public Consultations, 8th January 1858, No. 145.

(49) District Gazetteer, Singhbhum, Saraikella and Kharsawan, edited by L. S. S. O'Malley, page 38.

(50) Home Public Consultations, 8th January 1858, No. 145.

was an accredited officer of Government. Lt. Birch ascertained that large numbers of Coles, well armed, were on the way to Porahat to join Arjun Singh to deliver an attack on the Seraikella estate. On 22nd September 1857 the advanced guard of this besieging force of the Coles had actually established themselves at Ajoodia, a village on the Colehan, held as 'lakhraj', by the Porahat Zemindars. An arrow, said to be the signal of insurrection among the Coles and supposed to have come from the Porahat side of the Colehan, was about the same time intercepted and brought to Lt. Birch. It was also ascertained by him that Arjun Singh had sent a messenger to Dorunda for the purpose of inviting Thakur Bishnath Shahi to reinforce him with men and guns. (51) For some time Arjun Singh appeared to have taken no notice of the presence of Col. Birch at the Sadar Station. Col. Birch took to coercive methods against him. He declared him to be a rebel and sought to cause defection amongst his followers in his Porahat Zemindary. He also succeeded by proper representations in conciliating and resettling the minds of the Coles. Under the pressure of Government brought to bear upon him for restoring the Government treasury and making over the mutinous sepoys Arjun Singh at length marched off to Ranchi to restore the Government treasure. He paid into the Lohardagga treasury a sum of Rs. 19,578-8-9, recovered from the mutineers and also promised to credit to Government a further sum of Rupees 5,956-8-8½ together with the proceeds of gold and silver ornaments of some value, found on the persons of the mutineers. (52) The mutineers were also delivered up with their arms and booty to the Authorities at Ranchi. They were tried and punished, some by execution and the rest by long periods of imprisonment. As to Arjun Singh, he was ordered to return at once from Ranchi to Chaibasa to surrender to Lt. Birch for trial. The Raja (Arjun Singh), however, appeared to have been completely in the hands of his Dewan, a man named Jagu for whose apprehension a reward had already been offered by Government. This man was reported to be doing his best to excite the Kols to rise and using all his influence with the Raja to prevent his submitting to Lt. Birch. Whatever may have been the cause the Raja did not give himself up but continued to make professions of loyalty and to promise that he would keep his pledges. (53) The attitude of the Porahat Raja induced Lt. Birch to undertake a campaign against him. This resulted in the capture and execution of Jagu Dewan and a successful attack on the Raja's stronghold. The Raja, however, managed to effect his escape. This happened towards the end of November 1857. So long as Arjun Singh was at large, excitement among the Kols and other tribes in Singhbhum was kept alive. In fact by the end of December 1857 Mr. Lushington who had been temporarily appointed special commissioner for Manbhum and Singhbhum reported the existence of a widespread insurrection among the various tribes in Singhbhum. (54) What was reported was not unfounded. By the middle of January 1858, 3,000 or 4,000 of the mutineers made a serious attack on a body of 50 Sikhs in the

(51) Home Public Consultations, 8th January 1858, No. 145.

(52) Home Public Consultations, 8th January 1858 No. 145.

(53) Dist. Gazetteer, Singhbhum, Seraikella and Kharsawan, page 39.

(54) Dist. Gazetteer—Singhbhum, page 39.

employ of Government near the Mogra river, and on such officers as Captain Hale, commanding the Sikhs, Lt. Birch, Dr. Hayes and others. Not an officer escaped unhurt. The mutineers had also to suffer much in the fight near the Mogra river. This induced many of them to give up the fight against Government. The insurrection came gradually to be confined to those Kols who had been the retainers of the Raja of Porahat. Meanwhile on 17th January 1858 a Shakhawati Battalion arrived at Chaibasa under Colonel Foster. He destroyed the stronghold of Arjun Singh, the village of Chakradharpur and defeated the Kols who had gathered together in the southern part of the district. But the Raja of Porahat and his followers, the Kols, still persisted in their hostility. Between March 1858 and June 1858 several battles were fought between them and the Government forces, headed by such officers as Mr. Welden, the first officer of the Naval Brigade at Chakradharpur and Mr. Scot, the Second Officer. The mutineers were forced to take shelter in the mountain fastnesses in which Singhbhum abounds. By 15th February 1859 Arjun Singh and his surviving followers had at long last to surrender to the Commissioner. The mutiny at Singhbhum received a quietus. (55)

Singhbhum thus stood highly unsettled during the days of Mutiny. The spirit of crusade was kept alive mainly by Arjun Singh of Porahat and his followers, the Kols. At times tribes other than the Kols had been up in arms. Capt. Dalton wrote in 1858 that Chota Nagpur was full of 'tribes whose predatory habits were notorious long ago and whom recent disturbances had shown that they had not forgotten their hereditary renown.' He also believed that they were 'not impelled by feelings hostile to the British Government but they could not resist the temptation of following any chief who would lead them on plundering expeditions. (56) There was Arjun Singh to lead the Kols to plundering expeditions during the mutiny. The temptation offered by his leadership might have induced them to fight for him. Arjun Singh played the role of a Kurnar Sing during the period of mutiny in Singhbhum. The landlords and petty chiefs generally speaking maintained a friendly attitude towards Government. The Raja of Saraikella was a staunch supporter of Government while the mutiny was in progress. In his report on the mutiny in Chota Nagpur the Commissioner, Capt. Dalton, stated that one of the relatives and feudatories of the Saraikella Rajah in Singhbhum informed him (Dalton) that the Chaibasa Cantonment had been invited to plunder the treasury here and to join the mutineers at Dorunda. The relative assured that if the sepoys at Chaibasa were to make the attempt, they would be over-powered and plundered in their turn and that none would escape. "I believe this" wrote Dalton in his report "to be the feeling of the Singhbhum chiefs."

Not so shaky and agitated as Singhbhum was Manbhum. Still Manbhum stood disturbed during the mutiny. This was due to the presence in the district of the 64 sepoys from the Ramgarh Battalion which along with 12 Sowars composed the local garrison, as also to the excitement prevailing among the local Sonthals. Purulia was the principal town and administrative Head

(55) Dist. Gazetteer, Singhbhum, pages 40-42.

(56) Dist. Gazetteer, Manbhum—edited by H. Coupland, I.C.S., page 66.

Quarters of Manbhum district. On 5th August, 1857 the sepoy of Ramgarh Battalion stationed there mutinied. They plundered the treasury, released the prisoners in jail and then proceeded towards Ranchi 'without apparently creating any serious disturbance either in Purulia or en route'. (57) The Deputy Commissioner Capt. Bakes in charge of Purulia had meanwhile sought shelter at Raniganj. With the departure of the mutineers the district was therefore left at the mercy of the jail-birds and miscreants who 'committed various outrages in the town and on the roads towards Raghunathpur'. The sonthals of the district stood highly agitated. They made an attack on the zemindar of Jaypur, but were beaten off. The Raja of Panchet estate, Nilmoni Singh stood against Government. He was arrested and sent in custody to Calcutta. He was not released until March 1859. (58) The departure of the mutineers from the district and the timely arrest of the Raja of Panchet brought the mutiny at Manbhum to an early end.

The spirit of insurrection had travelled also to the Sambalpur district, then forming a part of Chota Nagpur Division. Sambalpur was then garrisoned by a detachment (150 foot and 12 horse) of the Ramgarh Battalion. (59) The news of the mutiny of their comrades at Hazaribagh produced a mutinous feeling among the sepoy at Sambalpur. They came to be led by Surendra Sai, the claimant of the Sambalpur Raj, and by his brother, Udwant Sai both of whom entered the town of Sambalpur on their forcible release from jail, with a force of 1,400 or 1,600 men by the middle of September 1857. (60) Captain Leigh, the Senior Assistant Commissioner in charge of the district sought to disarm the hostility of Surendra Sai but in vain. The situation gradually tended to be tense. 'Many of the principal Zemindars were collecting their paiks for the purpose of resisting Government and the whole country in the neighbourhood of Sambalpur was temporarily in the hands of the insurgents. . . . By the beginning of December the dak road to Bombay was obstructed; two of the dak stations had been burnt down while large bodies were collecting in various directions, and committing excesses of all sorts.' (61) The Commissioner of Chota Nagpur felt so much hard pressed with the conduct of the mutiny that it was decided to transfer Sambalpur temporarily to the Orissa division. (62) The arrival of Major Bates early in January 1858 at Sambalpur as the commander-in-chief in the district brought a turn in the tide. He defeated Udwant Sai at the Jharghati pass and destroyed the village of Kolabira 'which had been a nest of rebels'. The activities of Capt. Leigh and of such other officers as Capts. Shakespear, Wood, Woodbridge and Nicholls went a great way in paralysing the advance of the mutiny. Towards the end of February 1858 restoration of tranquillity was in sight. The

(57) Dist. Gazetteer—Manbhum, page 65.

(58) Dist. Gazetteer, Manbhum, page 66.

(59) Dist. Gazetteer, Sambalpur compiled by O'Malley, page 31.

(60) Ibid.

(61) District Gazetteer, Sambalpur, pages 32, 33.

(62) Ibid, page 33. In 1860 Sambalpur was transferred to the Orissa Division of Bengal. By a notification of 30th April 1862 it was made over to the newly constituted Central Provinces. In October 1905 the bulk of the district was retransferred to the Province of Bengal. Ibid, page 37.

mutineers were hunted down in all directions. Among those captured were some of the Zemindars who had been principally concerned in closing the roads to Cuttack and Calcutta. To induce Surendra Sai to surrender—he was still at large—the Government adopted the policy of bringing about a defection among his followers by offering to pardon them and to restore to them their confiscated property. In fact Major Impey who was placed in charge of Sambalpur subject to the control of the Commissioner of Orissa in 1861 granted an amnesty and the restitution of confiscated property to all the mutineers excepting to Surendra Sai, his son Mitra Bhanu Sai and his brother Udwant Sai.

- This policy had its desired effect. Many a Chief of the mutineers surrendered to Government. But the soul of the opposition in Sambalpur, Surendra Sai and a few of his chosen followers such as Hathi Singh of 'Ghes', (63) Kamal Singh Dao and Khageswar Dao, and Khageswzr Dao, descendants of Balbhadra Dao, the mutinous Zeminder of Lakhanpur (64) remained still unsubdued. 'Surendra Sai at long last surrendered to Government in May 1862 but his chief followers Kunjal Singh, Kamal Singh and others did not follow suit. For sometime after the surrender of Surendra Sai the district of Sambalpur remained quiet. But there was a recrudescence of trouble after the incorporation of the district with the Central Provinces. Early in 1863 when the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces R. Temple paid his visit to Sambalpur, a petition was submitted to him for the restoration of the Native rule in Sambalpur under the authority of Surendra Sai as the king. The petition was turned down with the result that Kamal Singh and others with whom Surendra Sai was still in alliance 'again appeared on the scene and began committing savage outrages in the 'Khālsa' villages.' Surendra Sai and his adherents were finally arrested by January 1864. Of those arrested Lokhnath Panda of Rāmpelā and Mritunjaya Pānigrāhi of Arda died in the jail, while Padnath Guru was acquitted on appeal. After acquittal he returned to Sombalpur. Surendra Sai and his brother Udwant Sai were released on condition that they remained at Raipur. Udwant Sai died at Raipur while Surendra Sai turned blind. Mitra Bhanu Sai, son of Surendra Sai was also released under orders of Government. Peace and order came at last to reign in Sambalpur. (65)

The facts about the mutiny in Bihar, as stated above, lead to the conclusion that the province was widely affected by the Sepoy movement of 1857-58 and that in certain areas of it the movement had assumed a popular character. Situated close to the widely affected North-Western area, inhabited by peoples akin to the inhabitants of that area in manners, language, sympathy and race, and above all, garrisoned by locally recruited Sepoys, forming a part of the mutinous Bengal Army, the province of Bihar easily caught the contagion of mutiny which gradually tended to be serious and wide-spread there. As the mutiny spread, it came to enlist the sympathy of different-sections of civil population in more areas than one. In other words, in many a region in Bihar the mutiny had a popular basis. In Sahabad the native warlike Rajput

(63) A zemindari in the Bargarh sub-division. Dist Gazetteer—Sambalpur, page 203.

(64) A village and Police outpost in the North-West of the Bargarh sub-division. Ibid, p. 207.

(65) District Gazetteer—Sambalpur, pages 33-37

population fought under the leadership of Kumar Singh and his brother on the side of the Sepoy mutineers against Government and held their own even against heavy odds for a pretty long time. Kumar Singh's presence in Ghazipur district in the Benaras Division, as stated before, caused a tremendous popular agitation against Government among the chiefs, landowners, and villagers. Referring to the attitude of the Zemindars of Shahabad the officiating Magistrate of Shahabad, H. C. Wake wrote to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal on 19th February 1857 as follows:—"The influential Zaminders (of Sahabad) unlike those of neighbouring districts have not given me the slightest assistance, but while they endeavour to keep up appearances by sending numbers of Sepoys on leave not one deserter has been apprehended by them, nor has any information of the arrival or presence of such been given by them. I have hitherto refrained from noticing in my reports the conduct of the Raja of Dumraon and Babu Koersingh in this respect, because I was in hopes that they would yet by zealous co-operation and assistance redeem their good names; their influence throughout their very large estates is so great that if they chose, they could be of the greatest assistance." (66) But the Zemindars of Sahabad under the leadership of Kumar Singh chose rather to head a rebellion against Government than to support them. The Raja of Dumraon had every sympathy with the mutineers but at the same time he wanted to pose as a loyal subject of Government during the mutiny. In a letter dated 8-9-1857, (67) to A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, E. A. Samuells, Commissioner of Patna wrote about the Dumraon Raja as follows. ". . . . He (The Dumraon Raja) has furnished an explanation of his conduct during the late rebellion in Sahabad. . . . He positively denies any previous knowledge of Kumar Singh's intention to rebel and alludes to the enmity between Kumar Singh and himself as negating the possibility of such knowledge on the irruption of Sepoys into Arrah. About Kumar Singh's rebellion, he says, he sent information to the Commissioner first by means of a Sowar and then by water but both his messengers were compelled to return. He then, he says, hid himself from fear first in one village and then in another but directed his people to keep quiet and support Government. He then enters at great length into the assistance which he rendered to the Magistrate and Collector previous to the outbreak, the number of men he furnished for various services and so on. . . . Since the restoration of order, he says, he has given Mr. Wake 24 horses for his mounted police and has advanced a lakh of rupees to the opium agent on his requisition." But the Commissioner of Patna could not take him as a sincere friend of Government and held in the same correspondence that 'the Rajah of Dumraon was a time-server. He was not sure which side would prove victorious, and wished to offend neither. It was at one time reported that he had paid a large sum to Kcer Singh and had even had an interview with him but I have been unable to obtain any confirmation of these rumours. His conduct, however, if not actively hostile, undoubtedly amounted to gross dereliction of duty. As a Zemindar he was bound under

(66) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, part II of 1857-58, page No. 27, Paper No. 79.

(67) Home Pub. Cons., 18th September 1857, No. 63.

the Regulations to give the authorities early notice of the incursion of armed rebels into his estates but during the whole continuance of the rebellion no Government officer received any communication from him whatever and he entirely failed to restrain his own villagers from plundering and destroying the property of Europeans. The aid he afforded to Major Eyre's detachment was of the most niggardly character, and it was not until Koer Singh was driven out of the district and victory had declared itself unmistakably on our side that he made his appearance again as a landholder and a British subject, bound to support the Government.' What stands deduced from the commissioner's correspondence is that the Dumraon Raja had natural leanings towards the mutineers. So the fact remains that the rise of Rajput villages and of the influential Zemindars made Sahabad a centre of popular agitation during the period of the mutiny. The mutineers in Gaya were strengthened by large numbers of disaffected villagers and Bhojepore men under the leadership of Judhar Singh, and Hyder Ali Khan. The attitude of the Zemindars of Gaya district was by no means friendly. Wageergunj in the neighbourhood of Gaya was widely affected. The villagers there under the leadership of Kosheal Singh were up in arms against Government. In Hazaribag the sonthals unlike those of Sonthal Parganas as well as some local landholders and the dispossessed 'Bhuiya Tikaits' rose against Government without perhaps any collaboration with the sepoys. The activities of Nilambar and Pitambar in alliance with the chero Zemindars made Palamau a centre of a serious popular agitation during the period of the mutiny. Singbhum had witnessed a popular struggle of the Sepoys in conjunction with the Coles and other tribes under the leadership of Arjun Singh. In Manbhum the Sepoys were not the only force opposed to Government. There the Sonthals and the Raja of Panchet Estate, Nilmoni Singh stood in opposition to Government. In Sambalpur, the Sepoy mutineers in their struggle against Government were led by non-military leaders such as Surendra Sai and Udwant Sai who along with other leaders from the civil ranks measured their strength against Government. This had the result of clothing the mutiny at Sambalpur with a popular garb.

Everywhere in the province of Bihar, however, the mutiny could not assume a popular character, though almost the entire province was affected by mutinous occurrences. There were areas where the movement remained confined to the military class alone and was easily crushed. At Sassaram the Sepoys rose without any support from the civil population. Bhagalpur and Monghyr were left practically untouched by the mutiny. Purnea was only slightly affected by mutinous risings of the Sepoys. The mutiny at Saran remained confined to the military class alone. The Raja of Hathwa stood by Government and helped the arrest of the mutiny in the district. Though the 12th Irregular Cavalry mutinied at Segowlee at Champaran, the Maharaja of Bettiah arrested the progress of the mutiny and in collaboration with Jang Bahadur of Nepal helped Government to crush it early. At Muzzaffarpur the mutineers some of whom were of course from civil ranks got practically no support from the Zemindars and thus unsupported, they had to wage a losing battle against Government. In the Sonthal Parganas, while the 5th Irregular Cavalry mutinied, the Sonthals themselves remained indifferent to the

mutineers. The Muhammadan villages of Southern Bihar generally remained quiet, while the Rajput and Brahmin villages rose around them. In Patna the opposition to Government remained confined mainly to the muslims of the Wahab School. It does not appear that the entire muslim community in Patna stood committed to hostility to Government during the mutiny. The rural population in Patna did not rise in revolt. On 6th October 1857 the Commissioner of Patna wrote to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal to intimate that the attempt of a few fanatics to excite a popular rising in the city of Patna proved unsuccessful. Many a respectable native resident of Patna, both Muslim and Hindu, rendered services to the Commissioner of Patna during the days of trouble. Among such residents of Patna mention may be made specially of Wilayut Ali Khan, Shaikh Ruza Hossain, Altaf Hossain, Maharaj Bhoop Singh, Roy Hari Kishan, and Babu Chunilal. (68) Wilayut Ali Khan had cast his lot on the side of Government from the commencement of the disturbance. In a correspondence dated July 21, 1857 to the Secretary, Government of Bengal the Commissioner of Patna wrote about Wilayut Ali Khan thus :—"A few days after the news of the mutiny reached Patna, he (Wilayut Ali Khan) presented to him (Commissioner of Patna) a petition, stating that he was ready to devote life and property to the service of the state and from that day he incessantly exerted himself in the cause of Government seeking for information, ferreting out bad characters, watching the city and obtaining good information through emissaries, employed at his expense, from the neighbouring villages. Both he and Dewan Moula Buksh incurred the deadly hatred of many in the city for the services they performed and their lives were in danger." (69) The munsiff of Jehanabad in Patna, Muhammad Fureed-ooddeen espoused the cause of government, when the Rajput villages in that neighbourhood broke out into rebellion and made common cause with Kumar Singh. (70) Elsewhere also in the province of Bihar there were other muslim and Hindu gentlemen who espoused the cause of government during the period of mutiny. Among them were Shah Kabiruddin Ahmad of Sassaram, Kazi Ramzan Ali of Chapra, Muhammad Wajid, Munsiff of Sewan, Nundeput Mahtoe, a wealthy 'mahajan' at Muzzaffarpur, Hydar Buksh, the Nazir of the Fouzdari Court at Muzzaffarpur, Mahesh Lall, the jail daroga at Muzzaffarpur, Enayut Hossain, Daroga in Sewan, Shah Khyrat Hossain and his brother Shah Ahmad Hossain. These last two gentlemen were members of an old mahomedan family which suffered much under the operation of the resumption laws of government. Still they stood attached to government and saved the life and property of English Officers from the agitated villagers and the alienated neighbouring zemindars. (71) There was also the Maharaja of Chotanagpur who was a strong supporter of Government during the mutiny. It is gathered from a correspondence from Capt. Dalton, Officiating Commissioner of Chota-

(68) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, Part II of 1857-58, Paper No. 79, page 73.

(69) Parliamentary Paper (House of Commons), Vol. 44, Part II of 1857-58, Paper No. 79, page 73.

(70) Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 44, Part III of 1857-58. Further Papers No 7 (in continuation of No. 5).

(71) Ibid, pages 161-162.

nagpur to A. R. Young, Secretary to the Government of Bengal that 'the maharaja's jaghirdars and followers were all prepared to oppose the mutineers in co-operation with the Government troops' and that he 'expressed his anxiety for the speedy reoccupation of Chota Nagpur by the latter (Government troops) and by the civil officers'. (72)

Thus while in some parts of the province of Bihar the mutiny had a popular basis, in other parts this popular character was lacking. Another noticeable feature of the mutiny in Bihar is that the same causes had not been at work everywhere in the province to produce the conflagration of 1857-59. While in Sahabad the Rajputs rose into revolt out of their allegiance to and sympathy with Kumar Singh who was goaded to mutiny by the treatment he received at the hands of the Sadar Board of Revenue, in Patna the mutiny had assumed a religious tinge and was the work of the muslims of the Wahab sect. The presence of the native regiments at Dinapur made the station mutinous. The news of the mutiny of the Dinapur regiments together with the spread of various rumours about the attacks on the caste and religion of the native population instigated Gaya to revolt. The rise of the Dinapur regiments caused mutiny at Muzzaffarpur also. The rise of the 12th Irregular Cavalry at Segowlee produced mutiny at Champaran and Saran. Purnea rose under the influence of the Jalpaiguri mutineers. The mutiny at Sonthal Parganas was caused by the rise of the 5th Irregular Cavalry. While the contagion of the Dinapur mutiny and the provocation of the detachments of the Ramgarh Battalion made Hazaribagh mutinous, Ranchi and Sambalpur rose in revolt at the news of the mutiny at Hazaribagh. The news of the mutiny at Hazaribagh and Ranchi led Palamau and Singhbhum to take up arms. What with the excitement among the local Sonthals and what with the presence of a portion of the Ramgarh Battalion Manbhum broke into revolt. Thus different areas were provoked into mutiny under the spell of different sets of causes. In this sense the mutiny of the province of Bihar may be considered as having a regional character.

HARAPRASAD CHATTERJEE.

A Forgotten Agrarian Disturbance in Chotanagpur.

THERE were widespread agrarian disturbances in the parganas of Patcoom, Bagmoonda, Hesla and Torang commencing with the pargana of Patcoom in the district of Manbhum in 1832. The community of Bhoomeez, an essentially agricultural class, took the most prominent part in it and were widely aided by the aboriginals. Manbhum at that time was a part of Zillah Junglemehals with Headquarters in Bancoorah and under the Commissioner of Burdwan Division (Circuit of the 20th) whose Headquarters were also at Bancoorah. H. P. Russel was then the Magistrate of Junglemahal district and W. Braddon was the Commissioner.

The immediate cause of the disturbances was a complete maladjustment so far as the possession of the cultivating lands was concerned. Jagannath Sahi, the Raja of Chotanagpur, had his headquarters at Palkot now in the district of Palamau. The original arrangement was that the Mankees and the Moorahs (Mundas) held the villages as so many village chiefs. The Mankees and the Moorahs were responsible for the collection of the rent and they used to turn that over to the Raja. But for various reasons in the early part of 19th century the system of Thikedars came into existence. These Thikedars were mostly Mahajans who had advanced loans to the village chiefs at a very high interest and naturally took over the collection of the rental for and on behalf of the village chiefs. With the advent of the Thikedars there was quite a widespread wave of oppression and unrest. The Thikedars naturally wanted to bring blood out of stone and the Rayats as a class suffered a lot. There was very deep resentment against the Mahajan Thikedars.

Mr. Russel, in his letter dated the 18th April, 1832, to the Commissioner of Burdwan Division, reported—"it has been customary for the Principals and Heads of villages, termed Mankees, Moorahs, Manjhees, etc. to hold their villages at a quit-rent subject to no increase and in perpetuity and that they are not legally liable to be ousted from the possession of their villages as long as they continue to pay the rents or revenue of them, that of late years this system has gradually discontinued, and that the dependent zamindars in the parganas of Raye, Branda, Selee, Booroo, Tamar and others have dispossessed them of their villages which they have let on "*theeca*" or farm to their Mahajans etc. thereby enhancing the rents. The latter individuals thus hold the joint occupation of farmer and money lender and consequently have sovereign sway over the Royatts and others from whom they exact double the proper rent and exorbitant interest on money borrowed."

Another set of reason for the discontent ultimately leading to the disturbances was that the early advent of the British brought in its train

"foreigners" in shape of "Hindusthanies", "Bengalees" and "Mahajans". They appeared to have deliberately encouraged the habit of improvidence among the aboriginals who were usually very careless about their budget. Very soon the aboriginals and the Bhoomeez community who were the very backbone of the agricultural economy of the area and practically of Chotanagpur found themselves in the grip of the oppressions of the Mahajans and the other foreigners. Their best lands passed into their hands. Owing to their previous loans they could not gather all the crops that they raised as the Mahajans would collect the interest and probably a part of the principal amount at the very khalihan and usually the Rayats hardly knew the calculations which were indulged in. These were some of the reasons why the revolt took place. Once a debtor, one continued to be always a debtor, such were the calculations on the part of the Mahajans.

There was another suggestion that the Bhoomeez and the aboriginals were discontented owing to the restriction of the cultivation of the poppy for opium through the Abkari Department and for the system of Handee settlement through the Abkari Department. There was, however, not much evidence for this. A new tax of -/12/- per family had, however, been imposed for tapping toddy.

From the reports and the correspondence between the Commissioner of the Circuit for the Division of Burdwan with his headquarters at Bancoorah and the Deputy Secretary to the Government and from H. P. Russel, Magistrate of Fauzdarri Adawlut Zillah Junglemahals, we have a fairly good idea of the nature and extent of the disturbances. At that time this area where the revolt took place formed a part of the Division of Burdwan.

The extent of the fury of the insurgents will be understood by mentioning that in pargana Patcoom only 48 villages were attacked by the insurgents and as many as 126 houses were plundered and burnt and 62 other houses were plundered. In pargana Bagmoondi ten houses were plundered while one house was both plundered and burnt at one village only. In pargana Hesla three villages were attacked and 44 houses were plundered and burnt while 14 houses were plundered only. In pargana Torang three villages were attacked and eight houses were plundered and burnt. Very large quantities of paddy, other grains, jewels, cash, large number of cattle, guns and other valuable articles were looted away. The number of casualties appears to have been large.

The British administrator came down on the Bhoomeez people that had raised the standard of revolt. Sections of the Military were deployed, large scale arrests were made and many were killed. Thus the backbone of the disturbances was crushed.

We have a good record of the disturbances in the detailed statement of one Sing Rai Bhoomeez who was arrested at village Nava Bagan in Patcoom. His statement was recorded in Inchagur by H. P. Russel, the magistrate, in the course of several days commencing from the 14th February, 1832.

Portions of his statement throw a good deal of light and may be quoted. Many of the old spellings have been retained. He stated—"Jugonauth Sing, Maharaja of Nagpur having assembled Kharapatur Sirdar of Koraicola . . . of

Nagpoor Province told them that he would not retain the Theekadars in his country as they were ruining it and ordered them to burn down their villages. He gave this order also to Ganesh Sirdar of Namosely, and Sohun Sing Sirdar of Kota at Tamar and said that they must not allow the Theecadars to carry away any of their property from his country, whereupon the aforesaid sirdars with all the Bhoomeez of Nagpoor obeyed his orders accordingly and commenced plundering and burning and turning out the inhabitants. . . .

At another place we find that he was asked if he had sent any arrow to any village. It may be mentioned here that sending an arrow with a particular message was in those days a sacrosanct order from the superior to the subordinate or from one colleague to another and could only be disregarded at great risk. To the question whether he had gone to Inchagur and sent any arrow there or not, the reply of Sing Rai was—"I sent an arrow to the inhabitants of Narva belonging to Soonder Dass and came to Inchagur where a Baboo of the Ranee came to me and said "will you set fire to Patcoom" on which I answered "I have no orders to burn Patcoom"—he afterwards said that the Ranee sent him to me to tell me that she had seized Suntul Shahoo, so that I might carry him with me. Accordingly I brought him to Rutun Sing and Sohun Sing sirdar. . . ." In his further statement Sing Rai stated that he had also sent an arrow to Mangoo Sirdar at Patcoom desiring him to return as he was burning Patcoom. He said that he had sent an arrow telling him that he had no orders to do so and made him return.

Sing Rai was questioned—"at what time did Rajah Jogonauth Sing assemble Khorapatur Sirdar and others and gave them orders to burn the villages?" A portion of the reply given is quoted—"On the month of Cattick of this year the said Rajah came to Byjonauth Sing Mankee and his son Mohun Sing Baboo of Chalum and assembled 12 sirdars at that place and said that he was determined to drive the Theecadars out of the country as they had oppressed his Ryaths," so you go and burn their houses". The disturbance commenced first at Govindpur in the beginning of Poose". Sing Rai gave the names of the 12 sirdars and mentioned that the Maharaja had made 12 seropahs (rewards) for the 12 sirdars to be given after they drove out the theecadars. Sing Rai further stated that several Mankees, Moorahs and Burracks had called upon the Maharaja at Patcoom and had told him that as they were very much oppressed they would have to leave his territory. It is because of this approach that the Maharaja repaired to the village of Chalum and ordered the expulsion of the theecadars. Sing Rai further stated that—"Jugonath Shaha Maharaja having collected all the chiefs ordered them to expel all the native, the Hindu-sthanee and the Mahajan theecadars out of his territories and to bring their riches, money, jewels and plates to him that he might pay his malgoozari (government rent) out of them "saying let their paddy rice and other eatable things be pillaged by the hungry and the poor."

It appears from the statement of Sing Rai that according to the ancient custom the 12 sardars charged with the orders of Maharaja went back to their respective jurisdictions and proclaimed his orders by the beating of the Nacara (big drum).

Baijnath Sing one of the principal Mankees of Chalum was early apprehended in the month of October by Mewa Lal Nazir and confined.

Sing Rai was further questioned as to why the Raja went to Chalum village from Patkoom and did not send for Baijnath Sing. To this Sing Rai answered "Byjnauth Sing Mankee of Chalum received a seropa (reward) from the Patmankee or chief of the Mankees. The Raja therefore repaired to Chalum gram. Mohun Sing Baboo son of Byjonauth was present before the Raja. The Raja repaired to Chalum to issue orders to his dependent zamindars to cause the outrages as it was no public matter connected with any Durbar".

The force of the sanctity of the orders of the Mankees and the Moorahs at that time will be appreciated from the following statement of Sing Rai—"the Mankées and Moorahs are the sirdars chiefs of all; all the Bhoomeez people are subject to them. Bhoomeez began to plunder being threatened to be put to death and to have their houses burnt if they did not join the sirdars."

The simple villagers believed the Raja implicitly as we find Sing Rai stating—"the Raja intended to make over the villages to the Mankees and the Moorahs after the expulsion of the theecedars so he ordered the theecedars to be burnt."

A question was put to the deponent Sing Rai "was any mention made as to the persons to be burnt and those to be retained?" To this the answer was "the Raja said he would retain the Ghessee, the Dome, the Arah, the Bhooan, the Rajput, the Khandria and the Bhoomiz; but he would expel Banias, the Mahajans and Bengalee from his territories; but he would not put any to death. Do not kill any one but ravage their property, riches, plates, clothes and jewels". In spite of this direction not to kill any one a very large number of men were killed.

Another question was put—"did the Raja encourage the sirdars"? To this the answer was—"the Raja had made a Seropa (reward) for 12 sirdars." The sirdars had asked the Raja as to what they were to do if opposed by the Hakim and troops. The Raja replied that he would be answerable to the *Hakeem* and *Pultun* when they come. Another question that was put to Sing Rai was "did he say anything about fighting with the Saheb Loke (English) when they come?" To this the answer was—"he did not say anything about fighting. The Raja said he would be answerable to the Saheb Loke (English)."

From Sing Rai's statement it appeared that the disturbances first broke out in the Soonpoor pargana belonging to Coor Hareenauth Shaha, paternal uncle of the Raja. Russel reported in the same letter dated the 18th April, 1842, that—"the leader of the insurgent party, apprehended in Patcoom, Sing Rai is remarkably shrewd intelligent man and from the way he gives his statement a literal translation of which I annex, I am inclined to give credit to it. From his account it would appear that the disturbances first broke out in the Soonpoor pargana belonging to Coor Hareenauth Shaha, paternal uncle of the Raja, that the Mahajans, Bengalees and other foreigners have made themselves very obnoxious in various ways in the acquisition of tenures from the Coor, to the exclusion of the former Mankees and Moorahs in the pargana who all assembled in a body in Asarh last and laid their grievances

before the Raja of Nagpoor at Palkote, complaining of the ascendancy of the Mahajans etc. had gained of various acts of oppression and exaction on their parts, that in consequence the Raja proceeded in the following Kartick to the village of Chalum in Soonpoor where the chief Mankee resides, distant I hear 50 miles from Palkote, selected there 12 sirdars and ordered them to collect all the men of their own caste that of Bhoomeez or Cole and to plunder and destroy the property and habitations of all merchants, Bengalees, etc. in short of all foreigners, viz., all those not belonging to the country and to expel them from his province, assigning to each sirdar or leader a distinct part of the pargana of Nagpoor to lay waste.

At another place Russel mentions—"the Mankees, Moorahs and all the lower classes in Nagpoor are of the Bhoomeez caste and I understand the latter hold the chiefs of their clan in general in great respect, that they are always ready to join in any plundering expedition when an opportunity offers. If therefore the principal features as I have stated are correct it is easy to account for the insurrection being so general that is, if the Raja is the chief instigator."

There was another reason for which the Raja was dissatisfied. The system of British Police and thanas was being introduced. This system envisaged the association of the local zamindars many of whom were being entrusted with the running of the police thanas. As a matter of fact, during this time we have the peculiar arrangement of some thanas being absolutely run by the Government and some thanas being run by the zamindars. The Raja wanted that either the thanas should be entirely Government establishment or otherwise solely entrusted to his management throughout the province. He was annoyed at the idea of the police being made over to his dependent zamindars and others. He thought that they were not entitled to the privilege which meant his disparagement.

Russel the Magistrate in contrast to the conduct of the Raja of Chotanagpoor and the other zamindars traced the loyal conduct of the zamindars of Baguncooder and one Powun Sing, a Rajput of the principal Ghatwal in the south part of the pargana of Bagmoondee immediately adjoining Patcoom and his son Anand Sing. They gave protection to all the persons who fled to their respective estates, and were ready for resistance, if necessary. The Jaipur pargana adjoining Baguncooder was quiet and no one in that pargana had been robbed.

A very severe cholera had broken out in the jail where the prisoners were kept. The immediate reason was that the jail was heavily crowded. Magistrate Russel had to distribute the prisoners. Assistant Surgeon, Cheek, in his letter dated April 14, 1832, from Bancoorah had reported to Magistrate H. P. Russel that the distribution of the prisoners had eased the situation. From the Doctor's report it appears that the Bankura jail was adequate to hold 600 prisoners and it was over full. About 200 more prisoners had been made over to the old jail hospital and a kutchha building was erected for this purpose. From this letter it may be guessed that the number of prisoners must have exceeded hundreds.

In his letter dated the 15th May, 1832, Thomason, Deputy Secretary to Government, informed Braddon the Commissioner of Circuit of the 20th or Burdwan Division at Bancoorah that the Honourable Vice-President in the Council had come to certain conclusions regarding the disturbances in Patcoom. In this letter the course of the disturbances was summarised and it was held that parties of insurgents, coming from the neighbouring country of Chotanagpur, "appeared to have been invited and brought into the district and their names and the terror they inspired seem to have been used as a cloak to gather the designs of some influential and unprincipled inhabitants of the Pargana." It was communicated that the conduct of the Zamindar of Baguncooder, Powun Sing and his son Anand Sing was to be rewarded in a suitable manner. It was further communicated that "the opinion expressed by Mr. Russel regarding the disturbances in Chotanagpur will be borne in mind hereafter when the subject may come further under the consideration of the Government. In the meantime, a copy of the general report and of the enclosed depositions will be forwarded to the Special Commissioners in Chotanagpoor for their consideration."

P. C. RAYCHAUDHURI.

Calcutta Historical Society.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of the Calcutta Historical Society was held in the residence of Dr. Jadunath Sarkar at 10, Lake Terrace, Calcutta, on Saturday the 23rd June, 1956, at 5-30 P.M.

Present :

Dr. Jadunath Sarkar (In the Chair).
Sri Tarit Kumar Mukerjee.
Dr. Narendra Krishna Sinha.
Sri P. C. Chatterjee.
,, Gopinath Chandra.
,, Narendranath Ganguly.
,, Birendra Nath Bose.
Khan Bahadur G. A. Dossani.
Prof. Nirad Bhusan Ray.

1. The Chairman opened the meeting expressing profound sorrow for and paying a tribute to the memory of late Major Harry Hobbs all the members standing in solemn silence.
2. The Proceedings of the last meeting were read by the Jt. Honorary Secretary Sri Narendranath Ganguly. Dr. N. K. Sinha proposed the adoption of the proceedings. On being seconded by Prof. Tarit Kumar Mukerjee, the motion was put and carried.
3. The Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1955, was read by Sri Narendranath Ganguly.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1955.

In introducing the Annual Report of the Calcutta Historical Society for the year ending 31st December 1955, it is encouraging to state that after passing through ups and downs, the Society has been able to enter upon the fiftieth year of its existence and the members of the Committee and Council are eagerly considering the possibility of celebrating its Golden Jubilee within this year in a befitting manner. In March 1932 Sir Francis Stanley Jackson the then Governor of Bengal and the President of the Society and also one of its ardent supporters very rightly remarked in his presidential address—"I wish

the Society a continuance of its successful career ; may it be still 'not out' when the half century is signalled".

Financial Position : From the abstract statement of Accounts of the General and Index funds drawn up and submitted by Messrs. Lovelock & Lewes the Honorary Auditors of the Society, after examining the accounts for the year ending 31st December 1955, it will be seen that the balance at the Mercantile Bank of India Ltd. Calcutta, upto 31st December 1955 amounts to Rs. 1,993-8-9 of which Rs. 56-5-7 belongs to the Index Fund, and Rs. 1,937-3-2 belongs to the General Fund including the Fixed Deposit of Rs. 1,000/-. The original Fixed Deposit Receipts, which have been renewed for a further period of one year, have been retained with the Mercantile Bank in their Safe Custody, which will appear from the following extracts of their letter 12th March 1956, to Honorary Treasurer of the society :

"We append below the full particulars of all your three deposits held in our Safe Custody."

Fixed Deposit Receipts—

- (1) No. 95/145 for Rs. 500/- due to mature on 2-7-56.
- (2) No. 95/170 for Rs. 300/- due to mature on 12-8-56.
- (3) No. 93/98 for Rs. 200/- due to mature on 31-12-56.

Total Rs. 1,000/-

The subscription of ordinary members amounting to Rs. 420/- was in arrears at the close of the year but I am glad to state that out of this the sum of Rs. 100/- has since been realised and it is hoped that by personal influence of the members a major portion might be realised.

Although there is a slight increase in the admission of ordinary members, our financial position, which mainly depends on the subscriptions of our ordinary members, does not appear to be very satisfactory, as one of our European members submitted his letter of resignation when he was leaving India for good, and two others had already left India ; and the names of the two other ordinary members will have to be written off under the rules. Moreover, the *Director of Public Instruction*, Government of West Bengal who used to contribute Rs. 200/- annually for the supply of *ten copies* of "Bengal Past & Present" to ten colleges of West Bengal under him, reduced the number to *four copies* for four colleges, and we received Rs. 80/- from him for the supply of four copies of B. P. & P. for the year 1953 ; and *lastly he took five copies* of each issue of the journal for the year 1954, for which we were paid Rs. 100/- as the price (this sum of Rs. 100/- has therefore, been placed under the head Account Sale, and not as subscription).

It may be stated here that since the foundation of our Society and the starting of our journal B. P. & P. in 1907 we used to look upon the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, as one of our great supporters, as we had a Standing Order from the then Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, for the supply of "Bengal Past & Present" to all the colleges under him all over

Bengal. May we not, therefore, expect the same consideration, and patronage from the Director of Public Instruction of our present West Bengal Government as we used to get before to the cause of the Society and its journal B. P. & P. We think that such consideration and patronage will be of material help for the furtherance of historical research and the spread of historical knowledge through the medium of our learned journal.

Grant of West Bengal Government : On the other hand it is most pleasing to state here that just before the 31st of March 1955 we received a grant of Rs. 1,000/- from the West Bengal Government. Had we not been favoured with this generous Grant it would not have been possible for our Editorial Committee to publish two decent numbers of our Journal in the year under review, which fact was also explained clearly to the sanctioning authority of the above grant of the West Bengal Government in our letter dated the 6th March, 1956. The Executive and Editorial Committee therefore, express their sincere gratefulness to the West Bengal Government.

In these circumstances we hope that the Government of West Bengal will be pleased to accord sanction for an Annual Recurring Grant of at least Rs. 1,000/- for our Society and its journal "Bengal Past & Present".

The Committee express their indebtedness to Messrs. Lovelock & Lewes for their kindness in auditing the Accounts of the Society free of charge year after year.

Hearty thanks of the Committee are due to all those gentlemen who have helped the journal B. P. & P. with their valued, and interesting contributions, and special thanks of the Committee are also due to Dr. Narendra Krishna Sinha, M.A., Ph.D., the Hony. Editor of the Society's journal B. P. & P. for devoting his valuable time to the journal inspite of the heavy pressure of his work at the Calcutta University.

NARENDRANATH GANGULY,
Jt. Honorary Secretary.

The above report was read and adopted with the addition of an amendment moved from the chair to the following effect :

"That the thanks of the Society are due to Sri Narendranath Ganguly for the unfailing interest and tireless industry with which he has been conducting the Society's affairs for several years past. But we are sorry that on account of the present state of his health it is not possible for Sri Ganguly to work so hard for the Society any more. The Assistant Secretary Prof. Tarit Kumar Mukerjee promised that he would in future regularly render his assistance to both the secretaries—Sri B. N. Bose and Sri N. Ganguly in properly carrying on the work of the Society."

4. Sri Narendranath Ganguly then read the audited Account of the Society for the year ending 31st December 1955, and placed on the table the balance sheet drawn up by Messrs. Lovelock & Lewes the honorary Auditors of the Society.

Sri P. C. Chatterjee proposed the adoption of the audited account, and it was seconded by Dr. N. K. Sinha. The motion was then put and carried.

5. Thanks of the Society are due to Prof. Nirad Bhusan Ray for the voluntary services offered by him in sorting out and chronologically arranging all the books (Bengal: Past & Present, etc.) lying in Major Hobbs' godown at 12/B, Marquis Street, Calcutta. Rs. 20/- granted to Prof. N. B. Ray for hiring an assistant and meeting extra expenses.
6. The letter of Sri Probod Mitter, the Accountant of Messrs. H. Hobbs & Co. Ltd., regarding the removal of our books from No. 12/B, Marquis Street, Calcutta, was read.

Dr. Narendra Krishna Sinha was requested to arrange with some booksellers for the disposal of the unsold stock of the periodical "Bengal: Past & Present".

Sri B. N. Bose is authorised to hire a room for storing the unsold stock on removal from Major Hobbs' godown.

7. On the proposal of Sri Narendranath Ganguly, Khan Bahadur G. A. Dossani, the Honorary Treasurer of the Society, was elected as Vice-President *vice* the late Major Harry Hobbs; and G. M. Gay, Esqr., as a member of the Council *vice* Mr. T. C. Longfield who has left India for good.

Prof. Amalesh Tripathi and Prof. Pratap Chandra Chandra are proposed as Ordinary Members of the Society. Carried.

8. All the office bearers of the previous year were re-elected.
9. For the Jubilee celebration (in the winter 1956-57). Sub-committee be formed, composed of—

1. Khan Bahadur G. A. Dossani (Chairman).
2. Sri B. N. Bose.
3. „ N. Ganguly.
4. Dr. N. K. Sinha.
5. Sri P. C. Chatterjee.

With power to co-opt.

With a vote of thanks to the Chair the meeting terminated.

A list of the available back issues of Bengal: Past & Present.

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1911	January—June	VII	14
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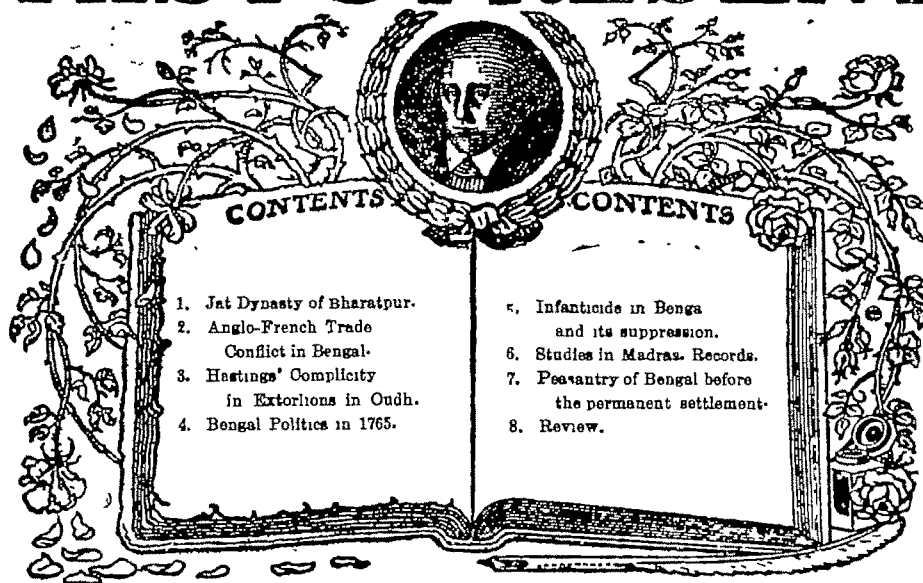
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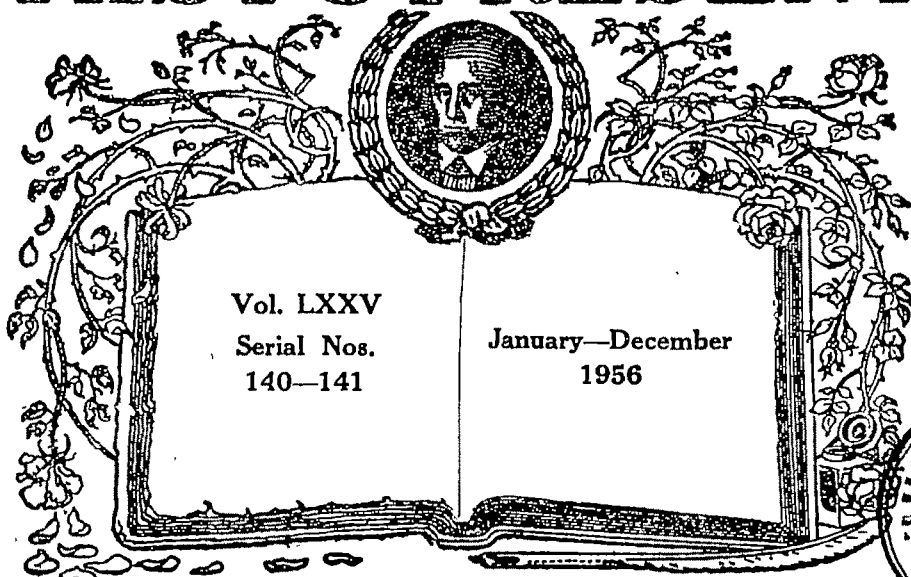
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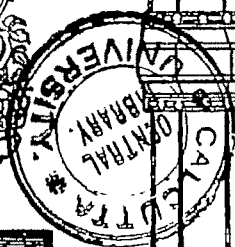
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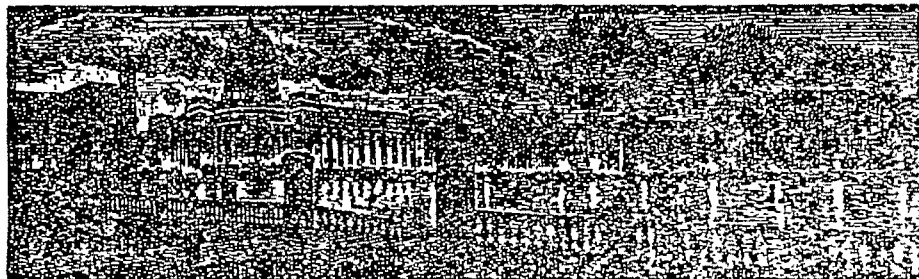
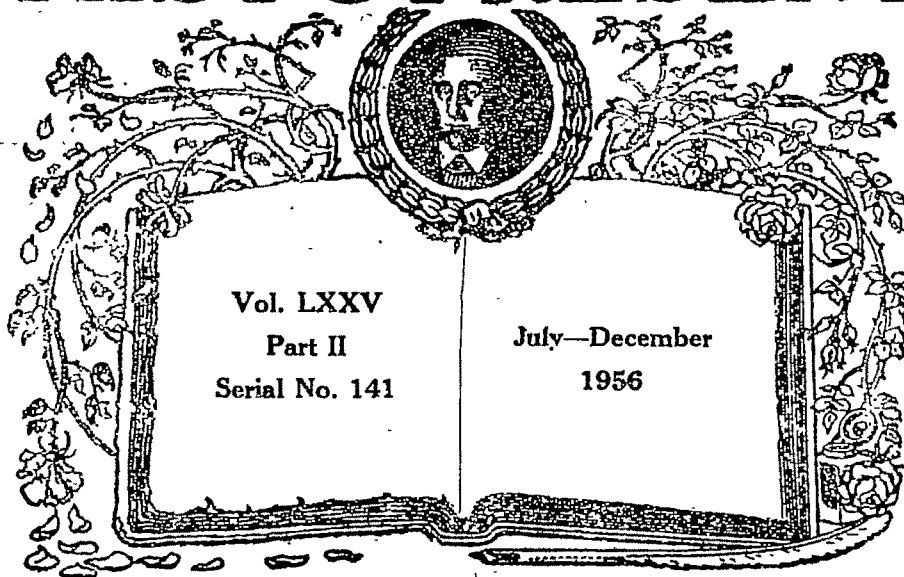
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BENGAL PAST & PRESENT



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The Jat Dynasty of Bharatpur.

(Concluded from Vol. LXXIV, Part II, Serial No. 139, 1955, page 101).

Translated from the Persian history of Franz Gottlieb Kuhn, "Fransoo".

(Br. Museum ms. Pers. Add. 19501)

II

HISTORY OF RAJA RANDHIR SINGH.

[f. 39b.] After ascending the throne, he reigned for about 19 years, out of which he enjoyed his eye-sight of 13 years and was blind for six years. In that condition, constipation [of the soft parts of the belly] set in, so that he had to sit in the latrine for more than three hours and most people reported their urgent affairs to him there. Rajah Hira Singh of Ballambarh, near Faridabad Delhi had given his daughter Indra Kuar in marriage to Rajah Randhir Singh; she was vastly learned in Persian and Shastric (*i.e.* Sanskrit) lore and wisdom.

A Brahman belonging to the service of the *deorhi* of Pem Kuar, the mother of Lachman Singh, had hidden himself in the bedroom of the Raja at midnight, intending to murder him, but mistaking the Rani who was sleeping clinging to the left side of the Raja for him, he killed her with a waist-dagger. Formerly this dagger had been made at Delhi by Raja Hira Singh the father of Rani Indra Kuar and given as a present to Rao Lachman Singh. [40a] When the assassin was executed, the dagger was pulled out of the body of the dead Rani and it was found to be that very dagger.

The second wife of the Raja, Lachmi Rani, the daughter of Raja Zahim Singh of Ballamgarh, used to maintain in her presence nearly 24 *nāzīr* eunuchs (harem superintendents) dressing them in the most costly robes and jewels. She was unrivalled in charity. In her husband's life-time she used to go three or four times every year in the manner of open-handed donors to Vrindavan, stay there, and make gifts in charity.

When Raja Randhir Singh grew blind, she told him, "Life is like a bubble. It is forgetting God to be proud of our life. God has given you a vast kingdom and treasures. Now is the time for you to withdraw your heart from the world, build a *kuaj* (bower) in Vrindaban and give alms to the poor; and after giving your kingdom to whomsoever you deem fit, gather your provisions for the next world." As the Raja clung to his kingship like flies sticking to sweets, he put her off from day to day. At last, Rani [40b] Lachmi went to Vrindavan, bought from a Brahman six bighas of land on the bank of the river Jamuna, in exchange for a village with a revenue of Rs. 500



a year, and built there a *kunj* with grand edifices, installing there the image of Thakurji. She set herself to arranging for a *mela*, and made nearly 25 lakh *laddus*, each weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ seer and some thousands of these containing gold and silver coins within them. In the garden of Jivārām near the Kālidah she made an enclosure fenced round with bamboos and having 22 gates. In the month of Vaishakh, Samvat 18** (blank) she gave one *laddu* and one Rupee to every person, whether Brahman or Vairagi, blind men or men with eye-sight, lame or faqir, chamar or sweeper, of every diverse caste and race, even babies at the breast, pregnant mothers (and even to the animals that accompanied them).

After completing the *jag* at this place [Vrindavan] she distributed one *laddu* and one rupee to men of every tribe in Mathura, Govardhan, Nandgāon, Barsāna and Gokul. Thereafter in Dig, Kumbher, Ver. and Bharatpur, among the army personnel and the ryots, of every tribe, Hindu and Muslim, every person was given one *laddu* and one *bhikh* (alms food).

[41a] I have heard from the people of this country that on the *mela*, the building of the *kunj* in Vrindavan, the garden and tank at the village of Khansāra, one krór of Rupees was spent [by her]. In her temper there was [no] smell of lordship; since the rise of this dynasty, no other Rām has been born possessed of such charity that the world sheds tears and heaves sighs at the recollection of her name.

In the year Samvat 1872 [=1815 A.D.] Lord Governor General Sahib arrived from Calcutta at Lucknow, Raja Randhir Singh, learning of it, sent his tribute (*peshkash*) in the form of gifts like elephant, horses, jewels etc. to him with Faujdar Motiram and Diwan Jawahir Lal. They had audience of him at Bareilly and presented their articles. When the Sahib came to Mathura, the two envoys were given congee and returned to Bharatpur, and gladdened the Rajah's heart by the news of the Lord Sahib's favour. When the Lord reached Fathpur, Rajah Randhir Singh with [41b] his splendidly equipped captains and chief men, went to meet him there. He gave money to the shopkeepers of his camp bazar to dress themselves splendidly. First the Lord Sahib visited Raja Randhir Singh in his tent and received costly presents. Then the Rajah returned the Lord Sahib's visit and received many kinds of presents in return.

[42a] On the third day the Raja took his leave and returned to Bharatpur and the Lord Sahib marched to Agra.*

After 19 years, when Randhir Singh had turned blind, a darvesh, who was a Satan in disguise, came to Bharatpur and settled in the midst of the Chauk

* At Moradabad, the Marquis of Hastings received on 25th Nov. 1814, Diwan Jawahir Lal, Faujdar Motiram and Chaube Daya Shankar, vakils from the Rajah of Bharatpur.

When the Marquis visited Fathpur Sikri, Raja Randhir Singh of Bharatpur, waited on him on 19th Feb. 1815, "accompanied by Kumar Durjan Sal his nephew and adopted son, by Kumar Madho S. younger brother of the former, by Faujdar Churaman his minister, and by Faujdar Motiram and Diwan Jawahir Lal Vakils." (Full description in his *Journal*.)

Bazar before the fort of Chauburja and falsely proclaimed himself a very learned man. He began to say, "If the Raja of this country sits by my side for a time and we exchange looks, then his eye-sight would be restored instantly." It was reported to the Raja, who thought that it would be improper for him to go to the darvesh in the bazar publicly. So, his eunuchs brought [42b] the darvesh to the Pāin-Bagh. First Rani Lachmi went in a *palki* to the Darvesh and presented Rupees ten to him. The cunning deceiver did not look at it, but said "I have no concern with earthly wealth." At this the Rani became convinced that he was a truly spiritual-minded darvesh, and reported it to the Raja. Next the Raja and the Rani seated themselves in broad daylight in one *palki* unknown to others and went to the darvesh in the Bagh and presented Rs. 50/- to him, begging him to cure him. As that deceiver could do nothing for him, he at the instigation of some backbiter, told the Rajah "Har Narayan Bakhshi out of spite has made a clay, image in the shape of a man [*habula*, idol] blown on it with magic spells, and buried it under the leg of his couch. If this image could be taken out of [43a] the ground, your eye sight would be at once restored."

The Raja in great anger returned to his palace and summoned the Bakhshi, who protested his innocence and urged an investigation. The Raja on becoming convinced of his innocence, expelled the darvesh from the garden. When after a time, the death of Raja Randhir Singh from obstruction of bowels and [43b] stoppage of urine came about on 4th Asoj Sudi Samvat 1880=7 October 1823, Rani Lachmi wished to convey his corpse to Vrindavan, build his *chhatra* there and herself live there. For this purpose she loaded incalculable quantities of jewels and coins in *raths* (covered carts) and got ready to go to Vrindavan with them, when Baldeo Singh hearing of it obstructed her, and placed his own man in charge of all the gates and *deorhis* of the palace.

Baldeo Singh sent the late Raja's body in charge of Rao Lachman Singh and Faujdar Kishan Ballav to Govardhan [as the first stage?]

REIGN OF BALDEO SINGH.

[44a] As Baldeo Singh was very wise and far-sighted ; therefore he sent Jāni Baijnath a Gujrati Brahman resident of Hada Kota who had long been his envoy to the Company's chiefs at Calcutta, to General Ochterlony the Resident [of Delhi] in the direction of the Ajmer Subah, with orders to keep the General satisfied in every way.

Then, Rao Lachman Singh died on 5 Paush Sudi Samvat 1880 [6 January 1824]. He left four sons—Durjan Sal, Madho Singh, Bakhtawar Singh, and Umrao Singh. They took his corpse to Govardhan and there burnt it, and on the third day prepared for sending his bones for deposit in the Ganges. Formerly the bones of Randhir Singh were sent for immersion in the Ganges on an elephant's *houda*, waving *chamars* on it, with an escort of horse and foot.

When the four sons asked for same splendour for [44b] Rao Lachman Singh's bones, Baldeo Singh declined on the ground that Randhir Singh was

a Raja while Lachman Singh was a mere noble, and therefore Lachman's bones should be carried to the Ganges in a *palki*. The four sons on hearing of it were filled with anger, and said they could convey their father's bones on their own elephant even though Raja Baldeo Singh refused to supply an elephant from the State ; "We know that from to-day he has excluded us from any share in the Raj. We have no help but to accept the arrangement proposed by the Raja through Faujdar Kishan Ballav. But if life is spared to us, we shall carry the bones of Baldeo Singh on the back of an ass ridden by Kālāls [potters]" *Kālāl means (1) potter, (2) distiller of wine.

Besides this, on the 13th day [after death] in celebrating the [45a] *jag* [sacrifice at funeral] of Raja Randhir Singh, nearly 1500 maunds of wheat flour, besides ghee, sugar etc. had been spent ; but at the *jag* of Rao Lachman Singh only 300 or 400 maunds of flour were used ; therefore from that day the four princes became enemies of Raja Baldeo Singh. Rao Lachman Singh had two wives,—one *Achhan* Kuar, of Bichhawari , the second Ummed Kuar the daughter of Mandhata Chaudhuri of Ballamgarh ; the first was the mother of Durjan Sal and Madho Singh and the second that of Umrao Singh and Bakhtawar Singh.

Rani Lachmi, the chief wife of Randhir Singh, grieved day and night for his death. Raja Baldeo Singh at times visited her and tried to console her, but in vein. So, she wished to go to Vrindavan, build a *kunj* there and pass the rest of her [45b] life in it in meditation on God. But as Raja Baldeo strongly suspected that her residing in Vrindavan would give rise to some disturbance (*fitna*) which it would be impossible to remedy, he did not grant her permission to go there, but put the matter off from day to day.

As it is a standing custom among the Hindus, and especially in this royal family, that when a ruler dies, his Rani goes to Mathura-Vrindavan, engages in mourning for him, gives away her wife's dress (*libās-i-subhāg*) to the poor, so, when three months had passed (after Randhir Singh's death), Rani Lachmi engaged in preparing for her journey to Mathura-Vrindavan for the purpose of mourning (*shok*), and Raja Baldeo Singh sent Faujdar Kishan Ballav with the Rani. Then he, in concert with Har Narayan Purohit, Chaudhuri Ramratan and other [46a] chief advisers (*Ma'tabarān*), opened the treasuries and buried treasure-pits, and seized all the property. When the Rani reached the village of Khasāwara, midway between Govardhan and Vrindavan, she heard of it, and said, "I have no concern with the wealth and things of this world. It will be a blessing if I can live in Vrindavan, which is provision for the journey to the next world."

Just then a letter arrived from Raja Baldeo Singh to Faujdar Kishan Ballav ordering him not to let the Rani go to Vrindavan without informing him. Next morning the Faujdar humbly reported the Raja's order. At this the Rani being filled with anger, got into her *palki* at once and reached the *mahal* [at Bharatpur] when four gharis of the day still remained. From that hour she abstained from any food or drink. For sixteen days she remained in this state of suffering, and at last went to Govardhan and there died on Chait Sudi Saptami Samvat [1880] [6 April 1824].

[46b] Before this Jani Baijnath had been sent to wait on the General [Ochterlony]. He brought with himself Captain Rae (?) as the representative of the Hon'ble English Company, with robes of condolence for Randhir Sing's death. Baldeo put the dress on and fired salutes from his guns.

At this time, Raja Baldeo Singh fell very ill. The doctors tried their remedies, and cured him of other conjoint diseases [], but a severe form of piles attacked him, which threatened him with death. One day a man named Mirza Isfahani appeared, whose treatment gave him some relief. But owing to his bodily weakness [? may be read also as failing eyesight] he often gave place to suspicion in his mind, and was filled with anxiety and sorrow on account of the hostility of Kumar Durjan Sal and Madho Singh, the sons of Rao Lachman Singh. One day after the *darbar* had broken up, he sat in the Jawahir Burj and for easing himself went to the bath-room, when one by one Madho Singh with some comrades, fully armed reached the Burj and [47a] planned to do him harm. Through God's help, Bakhshi Nandu Singh learnt of it, and he at once informed Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, the brother-in-law of Baldeo Singh, about it. The Chaudhuri promptly arrived with some soldiers and guarded the place. Madho Singh finding the opportunity lost, went back to his own house.

At this time, Raja Baldeo Singh felt convinced that without punishment it was impossible to put down this mischief. So, he took counsel with Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, that it would be best to instal Kumar Balwant Singh as heir to the throne with the consent of the English Sahibs, during his own life time,—as his own life was precarious and the sons of Rao Lachman Singh were ready with their ruffians to raise tumults,—then no disturbance would take place in this kingdom.

So, he sent a letter to the General Sahib with the trusty envoy Jani Baijnath, begging his protection. A reply [47b] from the General Sahib now arrived agreeing to his proposal. The envoy returned with the robe of kingship [for the prince.]

After a time General Ochterlony in the month of Magh Samvat [1881 = January 1825] came from Ajmer and Jaipur towards Bharatpur. When he arrived within a league of Bharatpur, Raja Baldeo Singh sent Kumar Balwant Singh with some sardars to welcome him in advance. When the General after granting an interview to Kumar Balwant Singh, entered the fort [of Bharatpur] and met Raja Baldev Singh, the two sat down together, the Raja assembled all the sardars of the country and in their presence invested Kumar Balwant Singh with the *khilat* for the kingship which had been sent by the Hon'ble English Company, and then before all of them he spoke to the General Sahib, "I have gained peace of mind in every matter by placing my son on the lap of the august [English] Government." The courtiers [48a] presented *nazar* to the Kumar.

Then he placed the Kumar on the lap of the General Sahib and said that he himself would now retire from the affairs of this perishable world, as all people, far and near, should henceforth consider the Kumar as his own self.

The General Sahib praised the far-sighted wisdom of the Raja and said, "You have strengthened the foundations of your kingdom. Though I am

old, I do not possess such prudence and regard for my own interests as you have shown at the age of forty by closely considering unimaginable dangers. Probably the cause of it is your long illness." The Raja replied, "Verily, owing to my continuous illness, every moment I expect the end of my life." So they conversed, and finally the Raja [48b] made gifts of elephants etc.

On 1st Phagan Badi, Samat 1881 [=4 Feb. 1825, northern] he paid a visit to the General's camp, who honoured him at the time of his *congee* in the same way as the Raja had done to him.

Thenceforth the Raja's mind becoming free from all anxieties, his heart withdrew from the affairs of the world, and a strong desire to make a pilgrimage to Girirāj seized him. He at once ordered preparations for the journey to be made. But owing to his physical weakness and the nearness of the Holi festival, there was a delay for some days.

On the chosen (auspicious) day he set out for Govardhan with Kumar Balwant Singh. Arriving at Govardhan he made a pilgrimage to the Giriraj, and then at the *chhatris* of [49a] the late Rajas Ranjit Singh and Randhir Singh he very humbly presented *nazar* and took up his residence in the *ḡanj*. Next morning, with Lala Mahat (? Bhagat or Basant ?) Singh and Faujdar Kishan Ballav, he started to circum-ambulate the holy places. In two or three days he finished going over half the route. Next day, early in the morning he went to the *chhatri* of Raja Suraj Mal his grand father, halted, and told Harnarayan Purohit, "The time of Holi is near, bring coloured powder and water from Bharatpur." It was done, and he played the Holi with the sardars present.

Then at noon he set out to visit the *chhatris*. As the heat of the sun over-powered him, he got into a palki and returned to his quarters (tents) and took medicines as prescribed by his physicians. From the hands of the Brahmans Harnā and Jodhā, he drank the spirit (*arq*) and medicines recommended by the hakims. After an hour he remarked, "Formerly from the drinking of spirit (*arq*) I used to gain relief of mind. It is surprising that now it has not caused the least decrease of my agitation."

The flux seized him ; and though the attendants present tried remedies, it was in vain. [49] From the early night of the eighth to the evening of the tenth day, for 16 quarters (*pās*) he remained helpless through the prevalence of the flux. Then he sent off Kumar Balwant Singh to Bharatpur. That day [26 February 1825] when four gharis of the night were over, he gave up this perishable world.

Next day, upto one quarter from the dawn, none was admitted to his residence. Thereafter Diwan Jawahir Lal Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, Faujdar Churaman, Bakhshi Kishan Ram (*sic*) and other officers, sat down together and held a secret council, "Grieving is the only course left to us. But we ought to take steps for saving the State from any harm." They agreed that as Kumar Balwant [50a] was too young to walk (after the corpse), the hair-shaving rite should be performed. It was done in the harem. Then all the officers were assembled at the door of the harem and the ceremony of condolence was performed through the mouth of Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, the

brother of Rani Amrit Kuar. He urged her to submit to the inevitable and henceforth turn her thoughts to protecting the realm and bringing up Kumar Balwant Singh.

The Rani wisely agreed and issued a command to all the officers of the State to obey her orders as issued through Chaudhuri Ram Ratan.

[50b] Thereafter they all took leave of the Rani, performed the bath of hair-shaving on the bank of the canal that flows at the foot of the [palace] Garden, and each one set off for his home.

On the third day Lala Mahant (?) Singh and Faujdar Kishan Ballav, sent the ashes and bones of the late Raja, with the established splendour.—elephant, horses, palki etc.—for being thrown into the Ganges ; and then came to wait on Raja Balwant Singh.

All the sardars in union began to make the arrangements for the *jag* [sacrifice] which was fixed for the Chait Badi 10th [14 Mar 1825], when Kumar Durjan Singh suddenly kindled the fire of disturbance. It was reported that he had assembled about one hundred men [ruffians] in his house. The sardars on hearing of it resolved to crush the [51a] mischief in the bud.

Then Jāni Baijnath arrived from Agra. At last, after consultation among themselves, Faujdar Abhay Singh and Munshi Chaturbhuj were deputed by them to persuade Durjan Sal. They conveyed to him the Rani's message that he ought to obey the head of the State and dismiss his unruly retainers. Durjan Sal professed to agree and sent the two envoys back.

Then the sardars decided to plant a company of the Chand Paltan and ten spies to watch the Kumar [Durjan Sal], with orders to allow no army chief to enter the Kumar's house, and if he called any man, they should at once inform [the palace council]. They stationed Faujdar Abhay Singh and Bakhshi Nawal Singh, at the gate of Durjan Sal's house.

Thus the Court party gained composure of mind. On the other side, as the quarters of Suraj Paltan and Hanumān Ghol, were close to the house of Durjan Sal, disloyal officers entered into a conspiracy with that Kumar. On learning [51b] of this, the Court party chiefs became filled with anxiety, and formed the plan of sending away the Hanuman Ghol and the Suraj Paltan with two or three other paltans under the pretext of regulating the Mewat province, and deputed Har Bhagat the brother of Jani Baijnath with a letter for General Ochterlony to Delhi, so that the State might be managed by his advice.

Kumar Durjan Sal, on Chait Badi 9th [13 March 1825] sent one of his servants at night to Gopal Singh, the Bakhshi of Hanuman Ghol, urging him to send the troops of the officers of that Paltan on the plea of guarding him. Gopal Singh sent this information to Raja Balwant Singh by Ram Sarup, his sarishtadar.

Then Durjan Sal with a party of 25 men [soldiers] and his son Jagat Singh took the road to the Paltan. As most of the men of those Paltans were of his party, he entered the camp of that battalion.

Jai Ram, an inhabitant of Gopalgarrh, and Zorwar Singh, Māwāram and other officers of the Paltan, who were in concert with Kumar Durjan Sal,

taught the others to be disloyal. But Gopal Singh, not being deceived by their words, quickly reached the fort (palace) and reported that Durjan Sal had entered among the Paltans.

[52a] Then Bakhshi Nawal Singh and Faujdar Abhay Singh arrived and revealed the same thing. The two sides parleyed all night, Durjan Sal talking for gaining the Raj, and the palace-officers defiant.

When day dawned, the news arrived that the troops of the Suraj Paltan, and Keshoram and other officers of the risala (cavalry) and the *bargirs* posted at Suraj Pol, and Thakur Azmat Singh the brother of Abhay Singh and Gopal Singh, were in league with Kumar Durjan Sal and were creating mischief. The royal officers, filled with alarm by this news, shut the gates of the fort and strengthened the towers and walls.

Then Durjan Sal, with the force under him and the disloyal officers of Gopalgarh and Suraj Ghol, and the troops of both these battalions, removed guns from the towers, and planted them opposite the gates of the palace-fort. Gopal Singh of Banchāwar, grandson of Bakhshi Sawai Ram, who had long been posted at the gate, submitted to Kumar Durjan Sal, and in company with Thakur Abhay Singh and Purohit Chain Singh, came from the Kumar as envoy to the loyal sardars, like Diwan Jawahir Lal, Faujdar Churaman, Chaudhuri Ram Ratan and others, and conveyed this message:—"As all the sardars of the country and officers of the army, inspired by regard for their own [52b] welfare, have joined my stirrups,—it will be best for you to become obedient to me, otherwise the end of the affair will be very bad." But the sardars, not minding his words, gave him a frank refusal.

Then Kumar Durjan Sal, summoning Shaikh Iman Bakhsh, the Chief of Artillery (*topchibāshi*) with his guns, at night planted the guns opposite the fort (*hisār*), and began to throw balls in. When a large number of the soldiers of the Paltan became present, Mirza Jāfar Beg the commandant, with his own battalion, sat down ready for fight outside the gate of the Chau Burja. Some of the sardars considered it proper to bring the Amir Paltan and the Ram Ghol, within the fort, but Diwan Jawahir Lal, out of farsightedness, forbade it. Fate willed it that the sardars assembled there would not agree [with the Diwan]. So, Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, Bakhshi Hargavind and Har Narayan, who had full faith in the Deshi sepoys of their command, becoming trustworthy security for their fidelity, brought these battalions within the fort, and gave orders to Faujdar Karan Singh, Chief of artillery, to fire the guns which were mounted on the towers and walls, saying, "We shall see what comes out of the screen of the invisible."

[53a] As Narayan Das, the clerk (*mutasaddi*) of the Artillery Chief, was one of the brothers of Munshi Sitaram, [writer] of the Kumar, and a hearty supporter of the Kumar's cause, he kept this fact in view and so managed things that the guns fired only blank charges, without hurting the other side. When the loyal sardars learnt of the mock fight of these villains, they were bewildered. In the end Har Narayan Purohit planted one gun on the tower and fired shots from it. Faujdar Kishan Ballav with his *bargirs* shot arrows and bullets from within the fort.

It seemed likely that Durjan Sal with his troops would retire with failure from below the fort, when the soldiers of the Amir Paltan and the Ram Ghol and the *bargirs* of the royal Line (*lain-i-khas*) turned traitors. The officers of the State, learning of this, told Rani Jal Kuar, the widow of Raja Suraj Mal, that if she personally visited Durjan Sal and effected a compromise between the two sides, the kingdom [53b] could be saved. The Rani, in her wisdom replied, [abridged] suggesting certain precautionary measures before she could go out, and asking for alternatives in the case of the failure of her mission. While this discussion was going on, the sepoys of the Amir Paltan and the Ram Ghol and the *bargirs* of the royal Line seizing their waited for opportunity, induced Madho Singh, the younger brother of Durjan Sal, who was seated on the roof of the harem, by swearing fidelity to him on Ganges water (as demanded by him) to come down and join them, promising to make his branch of the royal family "Kings of Braj." They [54a] seated him on a swift horse, and waiving *chamars* on his head from the two sides, entered the Jawahir Burj with him and proclaimed the kingship of Durjan Sal. As Chaudhuri Ram Ratan was not a favourite with the troops and had made many of them his enemies by reducing their pay and carrying into calculation their daily work [=attendance at parade], they now without Durjan Sal's permission, entered the mahal, bound Chaudhuri Ram Ratan and his brother's son Ram Prasad, and beheaded them.

Madho Singh then spread the rumour that all the troops and inmates of the fort had submitted [to him].

At this occurrence, Diwan Jawahir Lal, Faujdar Churaman, Faujdar Govind Ram, and other officers with the [54b] Bhadauria sardars, opened the gates of the fort.

When the control of the fort passed into the hands of Kumar Madho Singh, first Faujdar Govind Ram from the Chauburja came and had audience. Next Kumar Durjan Sal came from the army outside into the fort and met Kumar Madho Singh and issued orders to his troops not to molest or rob any of the people, nor to kill anyone by oppression. He sent a spy to call up Faujdar Kishan Ballav, who was staying in his own house fully armed with the *bargirs* of the Khās Line (Royal Guards ?), assuring him of safety and promising his favour in every way. So, too, a trusty man was sent to Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman giving them assurances and asking them to stay in the Chau Burja for some time longer, as they would be soon invited to his audience with full honours.

As Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, Mahant Sri Ram Bairagi and Rani Amrit Kuar and others had, before this occurrence, planned to throw Kurmar Durjan Singh into confinement, therefore the soldiers of the Amir Paltan, in revenge for it, slew with the sword, Ram Prasad the nephew of Chaudhuri Ram Ratan, and *Na bat* Ram [Niyat Ram ?] Kotwal with their comrades. The horses and [55a] other property of the house of Lachman Brahman and Mahant Sriram and others were plundered. Har Narayan Purohit was so severely beaten that he almost died, but with a few breaths still remaining he crawled and took refuge in the Toshak-khana of the State and thus gained safety.

Chaudhuri Muji Ram, of Daura, the brother-in-law of Raja Baldev Singh, was severely wounded (*kāri*).

In short, at this time when orderly administration was dissolved, ungodly people in greed of plunder, suddenly entered the *mahal* in which stood the private chamber (*Khilwat-i-Khas*) of Raja Balwant Singh and fired into every corner with their muskets. Ghasi Ram Dhāwa took Raja Balwant Singh in his arms and concealed himself in a nook, but God saved both from any injury. When the news of this disorder reached Kumar Durjan Sal, he ordered the officers of the army to hang any man who would shed the blood of any innocent person. He ordered Bakhshi Har Narayan to take post at the gate above (?) the entrances to the Tirpolia. Keso Ram the Risaladar of the bargirs [55b] of the royal Line, was ordered to establish his rule outside the gate of the Chau Burja, and prevent anybody from entering the fort without permission. Bakhshi Har Govind was ordered to take post with his own paltan close to this Burj and make *pucca* arrangements for the control of the *deorhi*, *burj*, gates and fort. Girdhar Singh the Adjutant was ordered to alight with his own paltan and the guns in the camp (*Chhauni*) of the Ram Ghol; Mir Iftikhar Ali, the darogha of the *gharnal* (horae swivels?) to remain doing his accustomed duties as before. So, every one continued at his former post under the orders of Raja Durjan Sal. He summoned Raja Balwant Singh from the harem with all kinds of assurances, seated him on his own knees, kissed his head and eyes, and said, "O brother, you are a piece of my heart. The kingdom and treasure belong to you. You are the Raja, and I am your obedient servant. You ought to feel happy in every respect." Then after a time, he sent the boy king back to Rani Lachmi in the harem.

Durjan Sal ordered Ghasi Ram Dhāwa strictly to watch very carefully the food and drink of 'this brother' at all times.

Then he summoned Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman from the Chauburja; they were received in audience and presented [56a] *nazars*. Raja Durjan Sal, appreciating their merit, gave them robes of honour. Every administrative work was done by him as these two officers suggested. At the same time he ordered Barkhā [or Barjā] the faujdar of *harkaras*, to quickly mount and search for Jani Baijnath, and wherever he was found to bring him to the Court by any means.

Then Durjan Sal asked Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman, to give him the best advice for the good of the State, as they were old servants of the State and very experienced in the affairs of the world. They replied that, as Raja Balwant Singh was the lawful sovereign and, besides, he was under the protection of General Ochterlony, it appeared in their opinion most politic that he should keep Balwant Singh seated on the throne as before and himself act as his deputy (*nāib*) in administering the affairs of the kingdom. If this was done there would be no crack in the edifice of the State; otherwise, in case of the contrary, such a trouble would originate that no man could quench [56b] the fire.

Durjan Sal promised to be guided by their counsel. But as his intimate friends were foolish and short-sighted men like Thakur Khush-hal Singh,

Munshi Sitaram, Diwan Hardeo Singh and Sriji Bairagi, at their prompting he said, "As I have by God's grace gained the throne of my ancestors, it would be unworthy of a brave man to go back, in fear of consequences to my former status." So the above-mentioned chiefs (ministers) did not venture to repeat their unwelcome advice but remained silent, and wrote a full account of the affair, on their own behalf, to Jani Baijnath, who had long acted as the envoy of the Raj (to the Resident) and was now residing in Agra.

Raja Durjan Sal, by the advice of his younger brother Madho Singh deceptively followed the plan of outwardly showing honour and trust to the old sardars, but in their hearts the two [57a] brothers believed that to trust these men was to lay the axe at their own feet.

At that very time he ordered Bālak Ram clerk holding the post of Toshakchi Bashi, Munshi Sitaram, Sadul Singh, Indrajit Cook, Thakur Azmat Singh (the brother of Akhai Singh) to write for the enlistment of new troops both horse and foot. Durjan Sal had no knowledge of the art of government; so he acted from dawn to sunset by the advice of some fools and ruinators in governing the State.

After some time he ordered Madho Singh to entertain new troops. As Madho Singh was an able and sweet-spoken man, many men of the country gathered round him like flies.

One day Raja Durjan Sal, by the advice of Madho Singh, as a measure of prudence, removed all the old officers who had been employed by Raja Balwant Singh in guarding and administering, and replaced them by men in his own confidence. At this time Thakur Khush-hal Singh and other brothers-in-law came from their [57b] homes as summoned by Durjan Sal, who told him "from to-day engage in conducting the government of the State and work so well that all the stores (i.e., departments) may daily improve." Thakur Kesari Singh was appointed faujdar of fort Ver, Thakur Padam Singh that of Mewat (?), Thakur Har Kishan (the elder brother of Khush-hal Singh) with 200 men of his own contingent (*tābinān*) as the controller of the Chauburja.

As Raja Durjan Sal, at the beginning of his revolt, had won the paltans over by promising them certain favours, he now granted them two months' pay (as bounty?), abolition of *wardi* (daily practice, drill?), and the payment of their salary in current coins (*hali sikka*).

But before the old fear had fully subsided, news came that General Ochterlony had started from Delhi towards the Jat country at the instigation of Jani Baijnath, the envoy. Durjan Sal's heart was greatly agitated, he ordered Bakhshi Kishan Ram at once to enlist troops.

General Bhunkra was appointed to make (*tartibī*) and repair the damages in the forts.

Then news came successively from the news-writers posted at Delhi that the General Sahib had set out on daily marches and encamped at the Chauni (Cantonment) of Mathura, and that there was a strong likeli-

hood that he would very soon set out for quenching the fire of disturbance in the Jat country. Durjan Sal, on hearing of it, lost his senses, and summoning Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman urged them to conciliate the General Sahib in any way they knew and thus save the State from extinction and the ryots from destruction by the British army. The two sardars replied that without restoring the throne to Raja Balwant [58b] Singh, the mischief could not be possibly remedied. The Raja took counsel with Madho Singh and Thakur Khushal Singh, the brother-in-law of Munshi Sitaram ; they were all of the opinion that this trouble had been created by those two old ministers, and therefore they should be outwardly treated with friendliness, but any [other] method which appeared to Durjan Sal's own mind as best should be followed for saving the State. Madho Singh said that the best course was to send a trusty agent and placate General Ochterlony by every possible means, but that if conciliation failed they should prepare for a fight to the death leaving the result to God ; troops should be assembled and the fort defences fully manned.

[59a] Raja Durjan Sal agreed. He ordered Bakhshi Kishan Ram and Faujdar Kishan Ballav to attend on Madho Singh, obeying every command that he might issue.

In short, Madho Singh used to inspect the towers and ramparts, and the environs of the fort [Bharatpur] every day, regulated the soldiers and kept every one of them pleased and confident. By the advice of the sardars of the Desh, he made full preparations for defence and collected war materials, giving the officers robes and pairs of gold bracelets and filled the ditch of the fort with the water of the Moti Jhil embankment up to the brim.

After gaining composure of mind by his war preparations, he sent Hardeo Bakhsh Bakhshi (the brother of Munshi Sitaram) Lala Basant Singh and Faujdar Churaman with a letter to General Ochterlony to say, "As God has made the English the paramount master of the country, whatever act contrary to friendship has been done by us may be settled (*tasfia*) by a compromise between [59b] the two sides. It is a true fact that I am an heir (*zihaqq*) and son of a kinsman (*āzān*) of Raja Randhir Singh, so I expect that the custom which was formerly observed in our family should be continued now in the same manner [i.e. the succession going to the heir *per capita*, instead of the heir *per stirpes*.] Kumar Balwant Singh is a small boy ; according to our ancestral custom it is not good to seat him on the throne. So according to the rules of our ancestors, what Raja Baldeo Singh has contrived is impossible [unlawful.] I appeal to your sense of justice to follow our old family customs and give me the throne. I am an obedient servant of the English Company Bahadur. It is not possible that any act contrary to the wishes of the English Sahibs will be done [by me]. Otherwise, if you wish for war, *Bismillah*, or if you desire peace and the happiness of the populace, it will be the grace of God the Merciful."

General Ocherlony was greatly alarmed on reading this letter . . . and hearing of the vast assemblage of deshi troops and full war preparations at Bharatpur, and therefore [60a] he agreed to the suggestion of Faujdar

Churaman and Lala Mahant (or Bhagat?) Singh to put the attack on Bharatpur off to a future date.

Ocherlony replied, "With the sanction of the Supreme Government, I had declared Raja Balwant Singh heir to the throne. You have upset him. But the Gracious Company pardons all offenders who repent. I now order you to seat Balwant Singh on the throne and yourself to conduct the administration of the realm as his regent (*naib*). Thus you will exercise the ruling power for 18 years [the period of Balwant Singh's minority.] If you refuse, the result will not be good for you."

[60b] As Raja Durjan Sal was bent on hostility, he did not obey the General Sahib's order. So, the General had no help but to retrace his steps to Delhi.

QUARREL BETWEEN DURJAN SAL AND MADHO SINGH.

Some wicked men, seeing that this close brotherly attachment between the two brothers prevented them from enriching themselves at the expense of the State, conspired with Sriji (the *guru* of Raja Durjan Sal) to cause an estrangement between the two brothers. The *guru*, forgetful of truth, by means of deceptive words created an enmity between the two brothers. So, one day Raja Durjan Sal told Madho Singh—"Brother, why are you undergoing such exertions? Better sit at ease in your own house ; everything will be sent to you there."

One day Raja Durjan Sal was holding Court in the Jawahir Burj and all officers were present at their respective posts. When Madho Singh came with a few retainers to attend the [61b] Court, Durjan Sal sent word to the guards at the gate not to allow Madho Singh to enter with such an armed force, lest he should cause mischief. Madho Singh very prudently did not argue about the matter, but returned to his own house. But from that enmity between the two brothers blazed up.

So, after a time, Madho Singh deceitfully set out on travel and hunting with a party of one hundred men (soldiers) towards Mehdi Bagh, on the east side of which lived the family of Raja Baldeo Singh, and at the same time a thousand men assembled within that garden. At night-fall Madho Singh on his return, alighted in the garden within the city walls where the *kacheri* of the kinsmen (*āzān*) of Raja Baldeo Singh stood. On hearing of it Raja Durjan Sal was filled with the greatest alarm, and he sent the chiefs of the country to visit and conciliate Madho Singh. The prince replied to them that he had no concern with or design on the kingdom.

[62a] Next day, Madho Singh seizing the opportunity, set out from the garden with the troops attending on him reached Suraj Pol, where a caravan of dealers with many horses had alighted, bought some swift horses from them, and entered the fort of Dig ; at that time about four thousand soldiers, horse and foot, were gathered round the Kumar. He ordered a salvo of guns to be fired and the music of rejoicing be played on the occasion of his entry into the fort.

Raja Durjan Sal, in the greatest alarm, sent his mother Achhan Kuar to persuade Madho Singh, and also some sardars of the country for the same purpose. They praised his wisdom and [62b] urged him to do what was good for the administration of the State, and to dismiss the army he had collected. Madho Singh, convinced of the stupidity of Durjan Sal, had no faith in any one of his Court, and refused to comply with their suggestion. So the couriers returned unsuccessful.

Durjan Sal, by the advice of his officers got ready for fighting; Thakur Khushal Singh, the brother-in-law of Raja Durjan Sal, promised to lead the expedition and bring the severed head of Madho Singh. When Durjan Sal sent an army against Madho Singh, the latter gallantly threw the gates of his fort open and waited, while the brother-in-law of Pirthe Singh, sallied forth and fought so well that the troops of Durjan Sal were repulsed. Madho Singh, by his wisdom and courage, in the course of time gained possession of Kaman and the pargana of Khorī, and took a large sum as forced loan from certain wealthy men.

At last in the month of Kartik the royal general came with nearly 20,000 [63a] soldiers and halted at Kho which is three kos from the fort of Dig. Madho Singh on learning of it, sallied out with such troops as he had, and a great battle was fought. During the battle, a letter from Durjan Sal reached Captain Durga Prasad and others to the effect that if they could capture Madho Singh alive and bring him fettered, they would be highly rewarded; but if that was not possible they should take to flight in the thick of the fighting. The captains took to flight, and Madho Singh entered Dig with victory.

In this battle Shyam Lal Khutel and Pirthe Singh (grandson of Badan Singh) were slain on the Raja's side. Thakur Khushal Singh, unable to fight, returned to Kāman, and there [63b] fought for four days with the sardar appointed to the place by Madho Singh, after which he gained the place, but had not the power to attack Madho Singh in Dig. After some time had passed in this way, in Asoj news came that Metcalfe Sahib had started from Delhi for that side. On hearing of it Raja Durjan Sal lost consciousness and summoned his troops from all places to Bharatpur. Madho Singh remained at peace in Dig.

THE BRITISH CONQUEST OF BHARATPUR.

In the month of Kartik Samvat 1882 Lord Combermere and Metcalfe Sahib came and encamped in the *Chhauni* of Mathura with a vast army. Durjan Sal, in terror, sent Sukh Lal as his envoy to the Lord to negotiate a peace. He prayed for the [64a] restoration of the old relations with the Company and promised on behalf of Durjan Sal to carry out the Company's order to give the throne to Kumar Balwant Singh. But the sahib did not consent, and demanded that in addition to a cash indemnity for his disobedience to the Company's orders, (1) all the guns of Bharatpur should be delivered to the Company, (2) after placing Balwant Singh on the throne, Durjan Sal should come out of the fort and live in some bāgh, (3) a Resident

of the English Government with a regiment of cavalry would be placed there for administration, (4) the orders of the Company's High Court should prevail in the entire Braj country. But a subsistence allowance would be fixed for them [the Resident's escort?]

As soon as the envoy got his *congee*, the Sahib Bahadurs marched out of Mathura and encamped at Jangina, a village four miles from Bharatpur. Here Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman waited on the English chiefs and professed great humility, but the former conditions were insisted upon. The envoys returned to the Rajah, who agreed to submit to the terms [64b] of the English. But next morning Sriji Mahant, Khushhal Singh and other brothers-in-law, and Munshi Sitaram dissuaded the Raja and changed his mind; Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman with all their efforts failed to influence him.

The English entrenched against Kadam Khandi and Suraj Pol and began to bombard.* The Raja determined on war, and posted Bakhshi Kishan Ram of the *baqāl* caste at the Nālki Burj, Munshi Sitaram of the Kayath caste at the Suraj Pol, Faujdar Kishan Ballav at the Suraj Pol Burj, Faujdars Gopal Singh and Hira Singh at the Jangina Gate, Khush-hal Singh at the Mathura Gate, and Karor Singh Faujdar at the Govardhan Gate.

He ordered Diwan Jawahir Lal and Faujdar Churaman to fill the ditch of the fort with the water of the *bund*. While they were arranging for carrying out his order, Col. Skinner and Mr. William Fraser Sahib occupied the *bund* from the other side. The Raja of Nimrana was posted by Raja Durjan Sal to guard the water of the *bund*, and a great fight took place between the troopers of the regiment of Col. Skinner and the soldiers of Major [65a] William Fraser, and the Raja of Nimrana, the last named being shot dead by a musket, at which the Bhadauria horsemen dispersed in flight.

After this there was an exchange of artillery fire day and night between the two sides. First, the English army gathered [to attack] the *pucca* entrenchment made on the side of Kadam Khandi, on the eastern side of it. In the fighting here Bakhshi Kishan Ram of the *baqāl* caste aged 60 years, Faujdar Kishan Ballav of the Gujar tribe aged 32 years, Faujdar Gopal Singh of the Jat tribe Sansani-wal aged 55 years, Faujdar Hira Singh of the Jat race aged 50 years, Faujdar Lachman Singh Jat aged 40 years, Bakhshi Har Narayan Gujar aged 60 years, Kishor Singh Jat of Ballamgarh (the brother of Lachmi Rani) aged 33 years, Achal Singh Jat of Dakuria aged 22 years, Ratan Lal Purohit aged 22 years, Faujdar Girdhar Singh Jat aged 50 years, and some other gallant sardars were slain. At this time Raja Durjan Sal in fear of his life, took to flight with the troopers under him; but the horse-

* The old fort of Bharatpur had the following gates, proceeding from the north-east angle, southwards and westwards:—Surajpol—Mathura (middle of the east face), Bir Narayan, and then in a hairpin-shaped re-entrant angle Atalband, Nimdar (at the s.w. corner), Kumbher (middle of the west face), Govardhan (just below the north-west angle) and Jangina (middle of the north face.) *Baldeo Singh's Garden* stands off the north-eastern corner of the fort, and *Qadam Rasul* is about 2 miles due south of it, both outside the fortifications.

men of the [British] regiment very heroically exerted themselves, arrested the fugitive Raja with [65b] his Rani and son Jagat Singh in the jungle, and brought them to the English Camp.

Thus the English gained a great victory, and there was much rejoicing on all sides. Then the English held a grand darbar and installed Raja Balwant Singh on the throne. Major Lockett was appointed to administer the country of Braj subject to Bharatpur. By auction held for one month, the booty in cash and kind,—elephants, horses, utensils, ornaments, apparel etc.—was sold to the traders in the camp and the country around.

Then on their own motion they summoned Kumar Madho Singh from Dig fort. He arrived with six [] soldiers horse and foot, and four pieces of artillery and alighted close to the British camp. Next day he waited on Lord Combermere and Metcalfe Sahib in their tents, professing humility and begging them to cherish him. The General gave him a costly robe of honour and presents like elephant and horse, sword and shield, and a pearl necklace. The following day, Lord Combermere [66a] and Metcalfe Sahib came to the camp of Madho Singh, who humbly gave them some presents as his *peshkash*.

After a few days when Madho Singh felt great distress for want of money, the English sahibs paid the salaries of his troops from the Company's treasury and sent him back, and his guns were taken into the Company's arsenals. Then the victorious British army marched away towards Alwar.

The Raja of Alwar presented himself as an obedient servant and fixed his tribute. After settling affairs in this way, Lord Combermere started for Calcutta, every Regiment [cavalry] and every Battalion returned to its own station. Metcalfe sahib went back by the road of Firuzpur, Hansi and Sonapat. From this place [Bharatpur], Madho Singh accompanied him up to Rohtak. When Metcalfe Sahib returned to his seat in Delhi Madho Singh came to him and is still living in Delhi. By the grace of the Company Bahadur [a pension [66b] for life has been granted to him.]

Note. William Fraser was a major and second command in Skinner's Horse. In peace time he did civil duties as a commissioner. (Fraser's *Skinner*, ii. 166).

JADUNATH SARKAR.

Anglo-French Trade Conflict in Bengal, 1765-1769.

THE Treaty of Paris 1763 not only restored to the French their settlements in India but secured them the enjoyment of commercial rights and privileges on terms of complete equality with the English. It was not some time before the French Company could restore its interrupted commercial activities and set its factories and agencies in working order. The earliest on record was the 'loge' of Dacca, established in 1754 and handed back to the French on 6 August 1765. (1) The records of commercial activities in Balassor recommence on 18 January 1766, in Chandernagore on 2 Feb. 1767, in Patna and Jougdia in May 1767, in Cassimbazar on 11 Feb. 1768 and in Choupur (Supur in Burdwan) on 15 July 1768.

The French traded chiefly in coarse cotton piecegoods and silk, opium, saltpetre and borax (mostly from Patna) and some colonial products. But French trade had from the outset a halting and maimed development. The generous concession of equal commercial rights was more often neutralised by the vexatious restrictions which the English imposed on the French on all quarters in Bengal. The chorus of indignant protests resounding from Chandernagore and the scattered agencies only attests the bitterness of this renewed trade conflict. The petty loge of Balassor which cost the French Rs. 149/- a month, had little trouble to report because the Maratha menace left its meagre trade in a languishing condition. But from the beginning of 1767 the other 'loges' complained not only of open acts of hostility but also of insidious English instigation to the native potentates to harass the weavers and contractors for the French with many crippling restrictions. As early as 24 March 1767 (2) the Council of Chandernagore sought English intervention with the Nabab of Bengal who now insisted on exercising his monopoly of saltpetre and on taxing the French goods at every toll-station instead of following the previous practice of levying the rates at Houghly only. The English expressed the opinion that the Nawab was within his rights in this matter. In their exasperation the French committed the folly of threatening the English with exclusion of their goods from French territory. This only elicited a curt rejoinder from the English that such exclusion was a weapon which would recoil upon the head of the French by provoking similar retaliation against them in English possessions. The French next fell upon their favourite device of a division of the weavers of Bengal among the French, the English and the Dutch. After a preliminary accord with the Dutch they induced G. L. Vernet,

(1) Documents Nos. 2665, 3056, 2928, 2419, 3179, 3149; 2951, 3035 in the Anciennes Archives de l'Inde Française, now in Paris.

(2) Doc. No. 2419, 2420.

the Dutch Chief at Chinsurah to broach the proposal before the Calcutta Council. (3) But the English waived this offer on the ground that any such settlement not only lay beyond their range of competence but affected a "right which no Indian prince had ever arrogated to himself". The Dutch Council saw through the English design and attributed this obstinate reluctance to the profits which the English private traders used to realise by selling their goods to the French and the Dutch. So, on 24 July 1767 (4) they proposed a compact with the French in order to dispense entirely with the services of these English intermediaries in their purchases even at the risk of thereby reducing the volume of their own exports to Europe. This turned out to be a hollow threat. A more ambitious scheme of a zonal partition of Bengal for the commerce of the three European nations or an agreed allocation of the respective quota after purchase through a single agency was ventured by Carvalho, the French Resident at Patna. (5) The scheme was worked upon and modified in the form of a memoir (6) presented personally by Chevalier, the Director-General of French settlements in Bengal to the Calcutta Council on 15 April 1768. The memoir suggested a bi-lateral agreement with three conditions :—

- (1) authorisation of the weavers to deliver one out of every 4 pieces of cloth, both fine and coarse, to the French,
- (2) control of the total purchase in all centres of production through an unified agency and a single 'writer',
- (3) an assurance to the French of fabrics to the value of Rs. 25 lakhs a year.

Chevalier admitted that the third clause might adversely affect French trade by restricting it to a specified limit. But he added that he could, besides, count on colonial products worth Rs. 2 lakhs, pepper worth $\frac{1}{2}$ lakh and salt-petre, red wood, lac, cowrie worth another $\frac{1}{2}$ lakh, making up a total of Rs. 28 lakhs—just sufficient for the cargo of four vessels of his company. His proposal provoked an outburst from French private traders whose interests seemed to have been thrown over board. But the storm soon abated as the Calcutta Council once again evaded overtures on the familiar plea that the proposed convention could not be considered without previous authorisation by their Directors in London. Chevalier, who had been in Calcutta in connection with the negotiations, was brusquely told by certain members of the Calcutta Council in the course of a private conversation "that the French and the Dutch exist on sufferance of the English in a country which is the reward of our conquest and the blood we have shed for it". (7)

During these importunate but fruitless negotiations the hostile pressure of the English continued unremittingly under many forms. Patna was the

(3) N. K. Sinha—Economic History of Bengal, pp. 62, 20, 58.

(4) Doc. No. 2420 bis, 2423, 2431.

(5) Doc. No. 2435.

(6) Doc. No. 3013.

(7) Doc. No. 3015.

scene of chronic friction and mutual recriminations. In May 1767 Carvalho of Patna (8) complained that he failed to procure the opium for which he had duly obtained the Nawab's Parwana and made the necessary advances to suppliers simply because of the Nawab's officers obstructing the preparation of opium and using violent methods. For this the English had a different explanation to offer. They maintained that the French could not obtain the desired stock because they had arrived too late for the harvest and that the Nawab's Officers simply removed the flags with which the French had unwarrantedly marked off certain poppy fields for their own. (9). On their part, the English disowned any complicity in this affair. Two months later during August and September (10) Carvalho reiterated his complaints in several letters of which one runs up to 11 pages of circumstantial details about English method of trade and the vexations caused by them and their Gomastas. Contrary to the French and the Dutch practice of making advances to producers and merchants for the current year only the English used to leave certain arrears of credit with these people to keep over them a perpetual stranglehold. Their Gomastas had the audacity to tear up the texture on the machines while these were being woven for the French and intimidated the Indian contractors who supplied opium to the French. Public notices banning all trade with the French were also alleged to have been distributed by these persons. Matters reached a climax when a grave complaint was lodged with Verelst the English Governor on 1 July 1767 against Rumbold, the English Resident at Patna. Rumbold was accused of having assaulted the French Vakil during audience in the Court of Chittabroy (Setabroy). (11) The unsavoury episode, however, terminated in December with a declaration "upon his honour" by Rumbold that the "statement of the facts was inexact" and Carvalho also wrote back to retract his charges "only in so far as they were inexact." A short-lived reconciliation was effected and in July 1768 Carvalho noted with pleasure that the delivery of articles by his agents proceeded without any hindrance by the English. (12) But disturbances were renewed from August. On 12 December the boats carrying 117 bails enclosing 12091 pieces of cloth were stopped at the customs outpost at Bary and the Muslim functionary in charge frankly imputed it to English intrigues. Carvalho suspected that the English had a plausible motive for the move. This delay would force the French Council at Chandernagore to purchase their requisite supplies from English traders to be in time for the sailing of their vessels for Europe. (13) In January 1769 an order of the "Nabab of Mouxoudabad," categorically forbidding all trade with the French was widely circulated. It was followed up with another order to guard the French 'loge' at Patna with a cordon of Sipahis to prevent ingress as well as egress. The business of the French was paralysed and the saltpetre stored in their boats was left exposed

(8) Doc. No. 2422.

(9) Doc. No. 2427.

(10) Doc. Nos. 2432-2437.

(11) Doc. Nos. 2432, 3179-3182.

(12) Doc. No. 2457.

(13) Doc. Nos. 2470, 2473.

to the weather. These orders were revoked on 15 March. (14) In Gualpara in January 1768 similar prohibitions were announced to the beat of the drum. But the troubles there ceased with the arrival of Bathoe from Calcutta after a fortnight. (15) The same tale of woe is recounted from other agencies. At Cassimbazar the French had a flourishing 'loge' costing them Rs. 500 to Rs. 525 per month. Here the French had to face competition with Gujratis and Armenians, besides the English. (16) The French had always to content themselves with what had been left over after meeting the English demand. The best silk was produced in the months of December to March. This was entirely seized by the Gomastas and Zemindars under the English in defiance of advances made by the French merchants. The French Gomastas were sometimes arrested on specious excuses by the "petty Nabab Mamoud Reza-khan who is merely an echo of what the English please to dictate to him".

A French commercial agency at Onjhera was burned down while the Gomasta had been taken captive by the 'petty Nabab'. At Choupur (Supur) (17) the English goods were exempt from all taxes while the French and the Dutch had to pay 5 as 15 gandas for every ox-load to the Raja of Burdwan. At Dacca in 1767 the French Resident estimated the purchase of the English Company at Rs. 4 to 5 lakhs and of their private traders at Rs. 12 lakhs at the lowest reckoning, while the French purchase barely reached Rs. 4 lakhs. "The competition we (Fr) offer has never been formidable enough to justify the difficulties they create for us". Thus in April 1766 Rezakhan grudging recognition of the subsidiary French outpost at Norendy. The French suspected herein the machination of the English Writers who resented the infiltration of their own Ryots to this rival settlement. In January 1767 the French Resident reported that a recent Parwana of the "Nabab of Mouxoudabad" interdicted delivery of goods by merchants to any but English boats. Weavers also were not to undertake orders from the French until the English orders had been fully executed. The situation became sufficiently annoying to call for an inquest by Cartier of the Council of Calcutta. (18) The intervention of Cartier who is eulogised by the French, as the 'soul of integrity and probity' led to a temporary improvement of relations. But the Gomastas of the English were issuing prohibitory circulars in Guapara again in Jan. 1768. In November French business in Dacca was seriously impaired by a vain but extremely humiliating search of their 'loge' by the Nawab of Dacca under orders from Mouxoudabad to ascertain if ammunitions in large quantity had not been stowed away here. This French Residency was a modest establishment whose total value including building, furniture etc. was estimated on the occasion of the liquidation of the French Company in 1769 at Rs. 3989-8 gandas only.

The account of these acrid squabbles of the rival Companies may be closed with a glimpse of the over-all financial position of the French Company. (19)

(14) Doc. Nos. 2478, 2481, 2485.

(15) Doc. Nos. 2443-2446.

(16) Doc. Nos. 3008-3016, 3018, 3021-3024.

(17) Doc. No. 3044.

(18) Doc. Nos. 3060, 3065-3068, bis. 3072, 3075.

(19) Doc. Nos. 2439, 2476, 2511, 2520.

From the account submitted to the Directors of the Company it appears that in the year ending on 31 Dec. 1766 the Company possessed Rs. 1190,000 cash and merchandises worth Rs. 2,364,000 to their credit. Besides, the Directors in 1767 sent them £ 3,400,000 to purchase cargo for 4 vessels. The balance-sheet of the Company up to 31 Dec. 1767 indicated a credit of Rs. 495,953 in cash and Rs. 1,778,333 in merchandise. In 1768 the Directors sent £ 5,520,000 in bills of exchange and £ 1,400,000 in merchandise on which latter they expected a profit of 20% i.e. about £ 288,000. Out of this, the Council of Chandernagore was instructed to retain £ 692,000 for their annual expenses and invest £ 6 millions on the cargo for 3 vessels. The remaining balance of about £ 4 millions was to be kept at the disposal of Pondicherry authorities. The Directors however put their finger on the core of the problem in their concluding remark, "We have been frightened by the amount to which your expenditure is mounting and if it is to continue at the same pace, the Company will not be able to maintain the commerce of which the return does not even suffice for its running expenses". On liquidation in 1769, the total debt of the Company in Bengal was found to stand at Rs. 1,365,532-4-12 as while its total assets including stock, building, furniture etc. were valued at Rs. 489,382-9-39 as.

The above account, it may be noted, does not cover the activities of the French private traders who were during this period in a peculiarly privileged position. "They traded on the capital of the servants of the English East India Company who wanted to remit their fortunes to England and keep their remittance concealed from their masters". (20)

Their transactions evidently did not come under immediate official purview of the French Company.

R. C. MITRA

(20) N. K. Sinha—Economic History of Bengal from Plassey to the Permanent Settlement—pp. 35-36.

Lord Hastings' Complicity in Extortions in Oudh.

THE story of Lord Hastings' oppressive financial transactions in Oudh has not received the attention it deserves. The so-called Oudh loans form a chapter of extortion the like of which is not common in the annals of British India. It is highly significant that the details of these loans would not have been fully known, if it had not been for the feud occurring between Colonel Baillie, Resident at Lucknow, and the Governor General. The Resident's high-handedness had become so glaring that in the end he was recalled from Lucknow by the authorities at Calcutta. Colonel Baillie avenged himself on the Governor General by making grave accusations of extortion against him. These charges are extremely serious and call for a detailed consideration. The facts reveal an unparalleled extent of British extortion, and show how Oudh was exploited by the Calcutta authorities.

In his evidence (1) before the Committee of the House of Commons and before the India House, Baillie sought to make out the following charges against Lord Hastings :—

1. That Lord Hastings had falsely stated that the Nawab of Oudh had, during the Nepal War, voluntarily offered a loan of more than two crores of rupees as the price of his emancipation from the subjection in which he was held by the Resident.

2. That Lord Hastings had falsely stated that there was an understanding between the late and present Nawabs on this matter.

3. That Lord Hastings had falsely said that the present Nawab had made a spontaneous offer of a crore of rupees or any sum.

In order to evaluate these charges, it is necessary to consider the facts which show that Baillie was no less guilty than Hastings. Baillie tried to establish his innocence by means of the following arguments, even though they are not convincing.

Firstly, (2) Baillie said, that the Nawab was "reluctant" to give any loan.

Secondly, (3) he asserted that he was compelled by Lord Hastings to press for the loans.

Thirdly, (4) the loans were at last given "*with reluctance*", and obtained "*by persuasion*", "*for voluntary it was not.*"

Fourthly, (5) as Baillie alleged, "the financial difficulties of the Company's government were made known to me by the Governor General himself in

(1) Vide Oude Papers, p. 1024 etc.

(2) Letter from Baillie Lucknow Jan. 10, 1815.

(3) Vide Baillie's evidence before the Committee.

(4) Baillie alleged that they were detailed "at his earnest solicitation."

(5) In October 1815, Baillie met Hastings at Kanpur.

person." Baillie further alleged that the Governor General himself took the initiative in suggesting the practicability of loans from the Nawab.

Fifthly, (6) the Nawab knew nothing about the Nepal War. "He could know nothing of them," claimed Baillie.

Sixthly, (7) A muslim who can not charge interest will not, said Baillie, think of granting a loan.

Seventhly, (8) the first loan may have been given willingly, but the second loan was "forced".

Eighthly, (9) Lord Hastings' Summary did not appear till 1823, and Baillie asserted that his evidence before the Committee had been given in 1822.

Ninthly, (10) Baillie alleged that Lord Hastings had made gross misstatements in defence of the loans.

Lastly, (11) all the negotiation with the Nawab was "in point of fact

The defence put by Lord Hastings is no more than just plausible. He reported (12) to the Court as follows:—

"His Excellency the Vizier, at a conference which I held with his excellency, tendered to me as a proof of his friendship, and of the cordial interest which he feels in the prosperity of the affairs of the honourable company, an accommodation of one crore of rupees in the way of loan. I deemed it to be my duty, in consideration of the actual state of the public finances, and the public demands, arising out of the prosecution of the hostilities with the Nepaulese, and the eventual necessity of supporting, by military preparation, our political views with relation to Saugor and Bhopaul, to accept the offer."

This reasoning would have been cogent, if there had not been another loan from the Nawab. It was clear from the evidence of all concerned that the second loan was the result of persuasion. Whether it was forced or not is immaterial, because the Nawab was too powerless to be in a position to oppose the demands. The Nawab, in fact, had to make a general offer in true Lucknow style that "his *Jan Mal* (life and property) was at his Lordship's command." (13) In short, there is no dearth of evidence to show that some amount of pressure was applied on the Nawab.

The Nawab himself wrote, "You mentioned yesterday the necessity of a supply of cash for the extraordinary charges of the Company. As for a crore of rupees, I shall certainly furnish, by way of loan, but beyond that sum is impossible. . . ." (14)

(6) Vide Oude Papers.

(7) Ibid.

(8) Baillie's evidence before the India House.

(9) Ibid.

(10) Baillie cited a number of misstatements.

(11) Proceedings of the Court of Proprietors, Feb. 8, 1826.
most arduous and vexatious".

(12) Letter to Court, August 15, 1815.

(13) Letter from the Nawab (Oude Papers).

(14) Letter from Baillie, Jan. 10, 1815 to Mr. Ricketts.

The apologists of Lord Hastings sought to defend his action on various grounds. Sir J. Doyle made out the following points (15):—

1. Hastings's summary was written without the aid of original documents, and so it could not be looked upon as an official paper. It was also printed without his express sanction. But, it would be apparent that "as a statesman, a financier, or a soldier, no Governor General ever stood so deservedly high as that nobleman."

2. At the time of the Nepal War, the Company's finances were 'much embarrassed'. Serious fears were entertained that the drafts of the Company could not be satisfactorily met. While these embarrassments prevailed, it was suggested that help might be obtained from the Nawab Wazir of Oudh.

3. The Nawab himself made an offer of a crore of rupees for the service of the company. At that time "Col. Baillie was not present." "The Nawab observed that he would most readily give the money, and he hoped the Company would receive it as a free gift." In other words, the gift was "free and voluntary".

4. The second loan was the result of negotiation, but no force was used in any manner. The Nawab gave the loan in a "*friendly and liberal spirit*," and the question of extortion never arose in this case.

5. Col. Baillie's own conduct was liable to criticism. Col. Baillie made an elaborate defence of his own conduct in the Court of Proprietors, for he was also a Director of the Company. His speeches and papers deserve some attention in this connection. His arguments were as follows:—

1. Certain statements of Lord Hastings were not correct.

2. The demands for money were made through him.

3. Sums demanded were of "considerable magnitude."

4. Baillie said that he had himself informed the Nawab that the Company "desired no portion of his treasures." (16)

5. At first a crore of rupees was mentioned, but Lord Hastings "intimated to me that he thought that a larger sum" was needed.

6. It was Lord Hastings summary (17) which, Baillie said, obliged him to publicise his own charges.

7. The financial embarrassments were not so great as to have warranted or justified the demands on the Nawab. (18)

8. "So far was the Vizier from coming spontaneously forward with an offer of this loan, that I make bold to say that he never even dreamt of such a demand being made upon him.

9. Even the first loan was obtained from the Nawab by the expressed desire of Lord Hastings, for it was not voluntary at all. (19)

10. There were difficulties in the negotiation for the second loan. The second loan was not the work of *three days* only, as the first was, "*more*

(15) Proceedings of the Court of Proprietors.

(16) Letters from Col. Baillie to the Wazir.

(17) Baillie alleged that the Summary of Lord Hastings contained false charges against him.

(18) This was only a personal opinion of Col. Baillie.

(19) Oude Papers.

than a month was expended on it". At first, the Nawab could be prevailed upon to advance only Rs. 50 lakhs, and it was after a protracted negotiation that the offer was raised.

11. The Nawab (20) had demanded that a bond should be given to him that "*no further demands should be made upon him.*" The Nawab had stated, "As I have now given a crore of rupees, and formerly gave a crore and eight lacs, it is impossible for me to give any more, and I trust that I shall be exempted from all future demands. Let me have satisfaction upon that point".

An objective study of the evidence on the subject would amply show that Lord Hastings' action in Oudh amounted to nothing less than extortion. All talk of Wazir's "zeal for the interest and prosperity of the British power in India" is unconvincing!

The fact is that the Wazir was no free agent. Even when he was later recognised as the king of Oudh, he remained a puppet in the hands of the Company's authorities in India. His so-called voluntary offer was no better than a case of simple extortion, for the offer was made evidently under persuasion, pressure and earnest solicitation.

The Oudh loans had no justification moral, legal or otherwise. The ruler was not bound to relieve the distress of the Company. Under the existing subsidiary treaty, he was not required to offer financial assistance to the Company. If other allies of the Company were not called upon to pay, there was no reason why the Nawab at Lucknow was alone to grant crores of rupees to the British. The fact is that the Nawab was a weak and dependent prince, so it was deemed easy to exploit him in the interest of the Company. It was known that the Nawab was helpless against any kind of treatment. In addition to this, the culture of Lucknow made the Nawab more servile and polite than was strictly necessary otherwise. His willingness to part with his "*jan*" and "*Mal*" for the sake of the Governor General is an illustration of his Lucknow humility which was fully exploited by the Resident and the Governor General.

Assuming that the financial situation was extremely unsatisfactory during the Nepal War, one can not justify a levy on the Nawab of Oudh. Either a costly war was a blunder, or money should have been found from legitimate sources like the money market or from taxation. Lord Hastings found it easier to get crores by way of forced loans which were not to be repaid in the foreseeable future, and whereof even interest was not to be paid on the plea that the Nawab could not act against the dictates of the Quran by accepting interest.

The evidence makes it clear that Baillie was directed to negotiate the loans by the Governor General. Whether Baillie was a willing party or not is immaterial, for he acted under instructions from Calcutta. What is most peculiar is that he made no objections or criticisms while he was still in office at Lucknow. He brought his charges against Hastings when the latter had already published his criticism of Baillie's conduct, and when Baillie had

(20) Letter from the Nawab to Col. Baillie.

already been removed from his office of Resident. Thus, it is clear that Baillie's vendetta was entirely due to his desire for vengeance. His imputations were inspired by personal rancour and malice.

The question arises as to whether the Nawab had any ulterior motive in offering a free gift to the Company. There is no adequate proof of this, but the probability is that a secret motive was actually there. It appears that the Resident had made himself a nuisance to the Nawab by a 'system of reform' concealing under that specious title a system of usurpations and encroachments of the Resident on the power and authority of the Nawab. The Nawab, who stood in terror of the Resident, may not have been unwilling to secure patronage of Lord Hastings as the only source of deliverance from the Resident's dictation. The loans gave an excellent opportunity of conferring a favour on the Governor General, which would give the Nawab confidence to appeal to him against the Resident's tyranny over him. Hence the Nawab was as willing to grant, as the Resident was unwilling to ask, the desired accommodation for the Company's government.

This is clear in a way from a letter (21) of Col. Baillie. The letter writes to Mr. Edmonstone: "shall I tell you any thing of my trip to Cawnpore to meet the Governor General I had better not, I believe; for I have nothing pleasant to communicate. I was desired to propose to the Nawab that his Excellency should propose to Lord Moira to make a voluntary loan to the Company of a crore of rupees: his Excellency did so accordingly, and his proposal was graciously received. To reconcile a proposal like this with all my original disinterestedness, was an effort of diplomatic effrontery, you must admit; but mark the sequel and admire. His Excellency has proposed in return that Lord Moira should propose to his Excellency to put a stop to the system of reform; ' This amounts to a confession that the Nawab was making an offer of loans as a price for his emancipation from subjection to the Resident's "system of reform" which must have been irksome to the Nawab. This system of reform gave Baillie an immense range of patronage, and the immediate control over the civil, as he already had over the military, administration of Oudh.

The first loan was thus very probably given for a definite purpose. But, the Resident was not immediately removed and it appears the Nawab was made to retract his charges against the Resident. So, it was natural that the second loan could not be willingly given. He complied reluctantly when he was told that the Company's need was supreme. The Nawab's consent was secured through the influence of a personal letter from Lord Hastings.

Can it be that the Governor General at last sought to placate the Nawab by dismissing Baillie from office with the sanction of the Council at Calcutta and the Court of Directors? The point can not be proved, but the inference is natural under the circumstances. It may be that the Governor General who had in the beginning thought highly of the Resident later changed his mind after receiving information about his misuse of authority. In any case,

princes (4). Miran had left two sons, Mir Saidu and Supan, and two daughters. The eldest of these princes was Najm-ud-daulah, a boy of sixteen. But his education was entirely neglected, his character and abilities too were of the meanest order. The only member who protested against the Council's general opinion that he was perfectly devoid of understanding was Mr. Gray. "Was he", said Gray, "more ignorant than he is, he is to thank the English for it, by whose means he was kept three years immured in a house in Calcutta, as in a prison" (5). The Council, however, decided in favour of Najm-ud-daulah. Burdett in his minute of dissent argued that Miran's son was the lawful heir, while Najm-ud-daulah was the son of Mir Jafar's concubine. And the difficulty of the former's minority might be remedied by the appointment of suitable ministers to function under the Company's supervision till he came of age.

But Miran's son, other members said, was too young and was never regarded by the late Nawab as his successor, whereas Najm-ud-daulah had so long passed as the "Chutta" (junior) Nawab and had been formally seated on the masnad by his father. "Certainly", wrote Spencer to the Directors, "he is not equal to such a charge, but as much so, more than any of his family. To have sought for any one out of the family might, as affairs are circumstanced, have been attended with very evil consequences to your affairs and the country in general at this juncture besides the appearance of injustice it would wear" (6). Another motive not discussed openly, had, no doubt, some weight. Najm-ud-daulah could give presents, Mir Saidu could not. "The opportunity of acquiring immense fortunes was too inviting to be neglected and the temptation too powerful to be resisted" (7). In point of legal right, Subahdar's office was held at the discretion of the Emperor of Delhi. To this the Council paid no regard. They had seen the riches their predecessors had acquired by the elevation of Mir Jafar to the masnad, by that of Mir Kasim, and Mir Jafar's restoration later. Memory was still fresh as to the danger of placing a vigorous ruler like Mir Kasim on the throne. So Najm-ud-daulah was chosen. The draft of a proposed treaty with him was next considered by the Council. The Nawab being a minor and ignorant of administrative matters, they decided that he should have a Naib Nazim as the chief manager of all affairs (8).

(4) He was also known as Nawab Ashruf Ali Khan (vide The Genealogical Tree of the Nizamat family). He was not even mentioned in the Council's Secret Letter to Court, dated 2 Feb. 1765. He died of small-pox in 1770.

(5) Najm-ud-daulah went to Murshidabad only before his father's death.

(6) Secret Letter to Court, 8 Feb. 1765; Secret Cons., 12 Feb., 1765; Separate General Letter to Court, 11 March 1765; Spencer's Letter to Court, 14 March 1765.

The Select Committee, however, held that in choosing the natural son of Mir Jafar such reasons had been assigned by the Council as ought to have dictated a diametrically opposite resolution and that the circumstances of Miran's son's minority alone would have naturally brought the whole administration into the Company's hands. (Letter to Court, 30 Sept., 1765).

(7) Select Committee's Letter to Court, 30 Sept., 1765.

(8) Secret Cons., 14 Feb. 1765; Letter to Court, 11 March, 1765.

Had Najm-ud-daulah any authority of his own, he would have, no doubt, appointed Nandakumar to deference to his father's wishes. This Brahmin of high rank began his life as a naib of his own father, Padmanabha Ray, an amil. Nandakumar was the Faujdar of Hugli when Clive and Watson conquered the French city of Chandernagore in March 1757, and had he not moved away, they could not have occupied it so easily. Most probably he had been bribed to neutrality. But unlike Rai Durlabh, Jagat Seth and others, he soon made his name repugnant to the English by his talent for intrigues and a proneness to exercise it against the Company.

After a prolonged enquiry in 1761-62, the Calcutta Council came to hold that Nandakumar had carried on a treacherous correspondence with the Raja of Burdwan and other rebellious zamindars, endeavoured by forgery and false accusations to ruin one Ramcharan, and was instrumental in conveying letters between the Shahzadah (Shah Alam) and the French Governor-General of Pondichery. Though direct proofs were wanting, the Council adjudged him guilty and deserving of strict home-internment. The Directors confirmed this sentence.

Again in 1764, Nandakumar was accused of inducing Balwant Singh, Raja of Benares, to violate his treaty with Mir Jafar and the English and join with Nawab Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh. He was even suspected of inciting Shuja-ud-daulah to fight against the English and carrying on a correspondence with the fugitive Mir Kasim as also trying to baffle the negotiations between the Council and Mir Jafar (9).

The English, therefore, held him in fear and distrust. They could not, however, remove him from affairs of trust on account of Mir Jafar's over-attachment to him. Mir Jafar's appreciation of his services and fidelity was clearly reflected in the distinguished marks of his favour and confidence upto the last hour of his life. In political status, Nandakumar along with the Nizamat Diwan held precedence over any man in the country except the Nawab and his family. As Rai Rayan, (10) he managed the Khalsa and collected the revenues from naibs, faujdars and others. The amils, mutasaddis and diwans in all branches of collections were appointed by him and were directly under him. All the sepoys with their commander Kaim Beg were devoted to him. Young Najm-ud-daulah too was surrounded and guided by his creatures. On all sides, the Company's servants could feel the weight of this "dangerous" man. They were in dread of Nandakumar.

Nandakumar, it may be argued, owed no allegiance to the English and remained the faithful servant of a master in whose interest no less than his own he sought foreign aids to reduce the Company's power. But, for the same reason his removal was thought essential. It was necessary to counteract his influence over the general administration by one whom the Company could trust absolutely.

None appeared to them so fit for trust as Muhammad Reza Khan, a

(9) General Letter from Court, 22 Feb.; 1764; Secret Cons., 11 Oct, 1764, 16 March 1765; Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit at Kasimbazar, 26 July, 1772.

(10) A title assigned to the Hindu Finance Minister and Treasurer of the Nawab of Bengal.

Persian domiciled in Bengal (11). Son of Hadi Ali Khan of Shiraj, he came to India at the age of ten. Married to the grand-daughter of Hazi Ahmad Khan, the elder brother of Alivardi Khan, he was for sometime Faujdar of Islamabad (Chittagong) and then Naib of Jahangirnagar (Dacca) in the second administration of Mir Jafar. It is said that he was reluctant to accept the office at Dacca because of the perfect desolation of that chakla and took charge only on a written guarantee by Mir Jafar and at the intervention of Major Adams. Mir Jafar was hard pressed for money and Reza Khan incurred the Nawab's displeasure for his remissness in the payment of the revenues. Reza Khan paid only Rs. 382,105 and was in arrears for about seventeen lakhs of rupees. He was willing to pay Rs. 2,619,178, i.e. Rs. 1,267,064 less than the sum originally agreed upon in the time of Mir Kasim. The angry Nawab, therefore, summoned him to Murshidabad about the middle of 1764 and detained him for six months in his own house under a guard of peons. Early in January 1765, this matter was adjusted by Middleton at the direction of the Governor. It was settled that Reza Khan would pay Rs. 2,686,000 for the current year and Rs. 130,000 on account of the arrears of the last year (12). But this amount was never paid, for just after a month the Nawab died and Reza Khan was desired by the Council to set out immediately to meet the deputation at Murshidabad and accept the highest office of the Subah.

The deceased Nawab disliked him, his son feared and hated him. He had no great achievement to his credit. Still, the choice of the English Government fell on him, for he had helped them with all his resources in times of their conflict with Mir Kasim (13). He would be an easy tool in their hands.

On February 20, the Council signed a treaty and sent a deputation to the Nawab to get it executed. The deputation consisted of J. Johnstone, R. Leycester, A. W. Senior and S. Middleton. They waited on Najm-ud-daulah in his private apartment, delivered to him the draft of the treaty with the Governor's letter and took all possible pains to convince him of the sincerity of their intentions. The Nawab read the draft four times, compared it with the treaty contracted with his father, agreed to accept it, and signed away some essential elements of sovereignty (14).

(11) To quote Dow, "a man of less integrity than abilities" (*The History of Hindostan*, vol. III, p. xc).

(12) *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, vol. I, Nos. 2522-23, 2525, 2534, 2536, 2538.

(13) In his last letter to the English Government Reza Khan wrote, "when the Mir [Mir Kasim] violated his engagements with the Company, Mr. Vansittart despatched a force from Calcutta to assist Nawab Jafar Ali Khan against him and at the same time asked the writer to send the troops with his followers and afford such assistance to them as lay in his power. He accordingly used his utmost endeavours and manifested his zeal and devotion to such a degree that he obtained commendations from the Council, who being convinced of the sincerity of his attachment, appointed him Naib Subah of Bengal with the chief management of all affairs". (*Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, vol. IX, No. 1546).

(14) *Secret Cons.*, 20 Feb., 28 Feb., 1765; Aitchison—*A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and neighbouring countries*, vol. II, pp. 237-240.

He was allowed to keep only so many troops as should be necessary for the support of the civil officers and the collection of the revenues. He agreed to pay the monthly assignment of five lakhs of rupees granted by Mir Jafar to assist the Company in defraying the expenses of the army. He also confirmed the grant of the chaklas of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong as a fixed resource for meeting the ordinary expenses of Company's troops. The English were, obviously, resolved to undertake the defence of the country. Spencer wrote, "To prevent revolutions or changes in future, we thought it safest for your affairs to let the defence of the province lay on us, and us only, or in fact that there should be no military force but yours" (15).

Secondly, the Nawab was to appoint Reza Khan as Naib Nazim and not to remove him without the consent of the English Government. The appointment, dismissal and allotment of officers and clerks (*mutasaddis*) must be approved by them. He also agreed to the division of the revenue collection into two or more branches under the Naib Nazim.

The trade concessions granted by his father were also confirmed. Parwanas were granted for the currency of the Company's trade. The English were to trade, as before, free of all duties and taxes, except only 2½ per cent on salt. The Company was again permitted to purchase half the salt-petre produced in Purnea and to share with the Nawab for five years in the chunam business of Sylhet. Rupees coined in Calcutta were to pass in every respect as equal to the siccas of Murshidabad. Like his father the Nawab also agreed to pay the *kistbundee* (instalments of money) for restitution to the sufferers in the late troubles. No European was to be allowed in the Nawab's service. The French were not to be permitted to erect fortifications, maintain forces or hold lands.

The measure that was most repulsive to the Nawab was Reza Khan's appointment. He even suspected that Reza Khan would be made Subahdar. He had already sent a parwana ordering the Khan not to move from Dacca. According to the deputies, this parwana was dictated by Nandakumar, but they soon convinced him how idle his fears were on this score and he seemed perfectly satisfied. They also induced him to despatch another parwana to Reza Khan to hasten to Murshidabad, and deferred the ceremony of public installation till his arrival (16).

Condemning this treaty, the Select Committee wrote that it "was pressed on the young Nabob, at the first interview, in so earnest and indelicate a manner as highly disgusted him and chagrined his ministers, while not a single rupee was stipulated for the Company, and their interests were sacrificed, that their servants might revel in the spoils of a treasury before impoverished, but now totally exhausted". (Letter to Court, 30 Sept. 1765).

(15) Spencer's Letter to Court, 14 March 1765 (Public Dept. India Office Records, 1765, Bengal Letter Received, Vol. 6).

(16) Secret Cons., 28 Feb. 1765. Burdett and Gray observed that the postponement of the ceremony implied too much respect and consideration for Reza Khan to the diminution of the Nawab's authority.

While approving the nomination of Najm-ud-daulah as Subahdar and the appointment of a regent, the Directors were not very happy in the choice of Reza Khan on account of his deficiency in accounting for the revenues of Dacca. (Letter from Court, 19 Feb. 1766).

In fact, the Nawab was not at all "perfectly satisfied". In his appeal to Clive later on, he narrated how he felt embarrassed since his first meeting with the deputies. Instead of, he said, conveying usual compliments of condolence, they at once sent out all the people present with him, even his brother Saif-ud-daulah. Then they asked him to send for Reza Khan to be Naib Nazim, and until his arrival the Nawab was forbidden to sit in the Diwan-khana (Hall of Audience) and carry on any public business. To these proposals, he did not agree and told them that he would follow the paper of advice of his deceased father. They retorted, "your paper of advice was of no force or virtue, and everything must be done as we think proper", and produced a paper and insisted on his signing it. When at the Nawab's call Mir Muhammad Irrich Khan, Nandakumar and other officers wanted to peruse the provisions, Johnstone and Leycester uttered rude words and turned out munshi Sadr-ud-din and threatened the Nawab that he must set up Reza Khan as his Naib and sign the paper immediately, otherwise he "should have no great chance of being in the possession of the Subahdary". Under such pressure "in an unfriendly manner", he complained, he had to sign the treaty (17).

This treaty had found a critic even within the Council. Gray pointed out how it had left the Nawab only "the name without any part of the power". It was no secret that Reza Khan was hated and suspected by the Nawab. To impose such a person upon him in such an important office was not only cruel, but also insulting. Besides, he added, Reza Khan was not of sufficient rank to hold a post that commanded the two highest officers of the state—Rai Rayan and Nizamat Diwan. Gray also objected to the equal division of the collection of revenues between Nandakumar and Rai Durlabh. As Rai Rayan, Nandakumar alone collected the general revenues of the country, while Rai Durlabh as Nizamat Diwan collected only the rents of the Nazim's jagir and was in charge of the disbursements of the Subahdari. These two departments were distinctly independent of each other and could not be changed or blended without fatal consequences to the country.

The English Government had also reserved a negative voice in the appointment of other government officers. All these clauses were held by Gray as the greatest mortification they could offer to a prince, their ally and not slave, to one connected with them by ties of friendship and not subjugated by conquest. Contrary to the Company's intention, he added, the Council by these encroachments were usurping the Nawab's authority, so that in consequence the Company and not the Nawab would be considered as principal and accountable for everything. Also, as force was the only argument in their favour, they were tacitly acknowledging the same right in other nations. Finally, Najm-ud-daulah was of sufficient age and capacity to manage his government without Reza Khan to help him. As to his inexperience, only a short time would be required to make it up. In short, Gray

(17) Select Committee Proceedings, 1. June 1765.

Thus he began his letter, "The situation which I am now in will not permit me to acquaint you with all the circumstances which have happened, but I will make part thereof known to you".

wanted that the Naib must be a person in whom the Nawab had sufficient confidence and all appearances of reducing the Nawab's power and its assumption by the English ought to be avoided (18).

In reply, other members advocated their decisions with a remarkable boldness. The Company had certainly a right to expect that its forces were "devoted to establish a succession and government that shall be permanent in itself, secure and beneficial" to its affairs. And this right was not a novel one, being "thrice already assumed". If this was a usurpation, this was more so than the first appointment of Mir Jafar by the English Government without previous reference to the Court of Directors or the Emperor's assent.

To recognise the Emperor's right of confirmation while the Company supported a Nazim by force was "the greatest absurdity and argument very dangerous to support". Looking back, well they might find that all inheritance had been forcibly obtained in 1757 and thereafter. They had thrice dictated to the Emperor the Nazim of their choice, and if they did not exert their influence on this occasion also, Najm-ud-daulah would not long remain the Subahdar of these provinces.

Had they acted otherwise, the whole government would have devolved on Nandakumar, who had an absolute influence on the young Nawab. In Mir Jafar's life time they had tried in vain to dislodge him from the administration. Now had come the grand opportunity which should not slip by. Nor did they conceive that Mir Jafar and Najm-ud-daulah had any aversion to Reza Khan except what was created by the misrepresentation and jealousy instilled by Nandakumar in their minds. This misunderstanding was but what an hour's conversion would remove. They had faith in Reza Khan. To have him next to the Nawab was all the more necessary since the latter was worthless.

The plan they had devised was wise, as it was based on check and balance. Its security was ensured by ill feeling between Reza Khan and Nandakumar. There was also no marked intimacy between Reza Khan and Rai Durlabh. Nor could Reza Khan aspire at wielding too much power. The collection of revenue was to be in other hands and divided into two or more departments. Appointment of revenue officers was left not to him but to the Nawab subject to advice of the Council. By reserving to themselves the privilege of objection about the misconduct of government servants the Council hoped to exercise a salutary check on the Nawab. Before these arrangements Nandakumar had practically no check over him in the revenue administration since he was responsible to the Nawab only who could not judge these matters. Nandakumar was now not only placed in a subordinate position but left with an almost equal power with Rai Durlabh, so that their old jealousy would make them constant check on each other's aspirations. There was no use denying that it was by force—mere force of arms and not legal right—that the English were laying such restraint on a worthless youth at the head of the Subah. Should they, after losing so many lives, give up their authority in Bengal and sacrifice at once all they had been contending

(18) Secret Cons., 19 Feb., 20 Feb. 1765.

for? Thus, in the opinion of the Council majority, the Nawab must be supported by force and be given to understand that he could have no right but what he received from the English and their influence with the Emperor (19).

The Nawab's installation had been deferred at the particular desire of the deputies and he had lent his consent. It was only on the morning of the 3rd March that the reason of his willingness was revealed, when Nandakumar came to the deputies with a parwana from the Emperor promising the Nawab confirmation in the Subahdari. It had been obtained through Shitab Ray, the provincial Diwan of the Emperor, in consequence of the Nawab's application. This attempt at upholding the *de jure* position of the Nawab with the respect to the Mughal Emperor's right of nomination had to be frustrated. The deputies hurried to the killa (fort) and explained to the Nawab the impropriety of such a measure. He was told that if Sanads from the Emperor should ever appear necessary they were to be obtained through the Council's application alone. That very morning the deputies publicly seated the Nawab on the masnad and mutually exchanged the articles of the treaty. Reza Khan received the title of Muin-ud-daulah Muzaffar Jang with the office of Naib Subah. On the 7th, Najm-ud-daulah was proclaimed by the Council on behalf of the Company as the Subahdar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa (20).

The next task of the deputies was to remodel the revenue administration in accordance with the treaty. They now set to acquire an actual knowledge of the revenue and consolidate the Company's power. But this work proved far more difficult than they expected on account of the tough resistance from Nandakumar and mutasaddis under him. Neither he and his officers nor the zamindars made the usual acknowledgment to the new Naib Subah till Nandakumar was "absolutely" ordered by the Nawab to do so at the instance of the deputation. In violation of the treaty Nandakumar still remained the principal adviser of the Nawab and carried on the functions of the Naib Nazim. The English gentlemen, therefore, in the very presence of the Nawab and the munshis, plainly explained to him that his authority was to be limited solely to the collections. Though the Nawab appeared very submissive, the gentlemen felt ill at ease to find that all the people about him as also the commander Kaim Beg were exceedingly devoted to Nandakumar and hostile

(19) Secret Cons., 20 Feb. 1765; Letter from Spencer to Court, 14 March 1765.

(20) Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, Nos. 2599-2600; Secret Cons., 6 March 1765; Letter to Court, 11 March 1765. Gray said, it was very natural for the Nawab to apply to his sovereign for a sanad of confirmation and due respect ought to be paid to it.

It was to the English Governor that the Emperor complained in June that inspite of Imperial letters (Shukkas) Najm-ud-daulah had not as yet received the Sanads, and that the present manager of the Nawab's affairs was "careless and ignorant of the customs of the Empire". (Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, No. 2662).

As to Nandakumar's role in these intrigues, Hastings himself once admitted, "Surely it was not only not culpable but even praiseworthy. He endeavoured to give consequence to his master, and to pave the way to his independence, by obtaining a firman (sic-Farman) from the King for his appointment to the Subaship and he opposed the promotion of Mahmud Rizza Cawn, because he looked upon it as a supersession of the rights and authority of the Nabob" (Progs., Com. of Circuit, Kasimbazar, 28 July 1772).

to the recent changes. Of the affairs of Bihar they could hardly get any information. If Nandakumar were not kept under close watch, the deputies feared, he would surely upset the recent measures and resume the great power they wanted to vest in Reza Khan. Rai Durlabh also reported against the "evil-minded people" of Murshidabad, who had taken offence at his promotion and that of Reza Khan and incited Kaim Beg to create a disturbance under the pretence of arrears and murder the two ministers. Kaim Beg was getting ready in the hope that the few troops at Murshidabad would not get much help from Calcutta or from the west. The crisis was averted by Reza Khan's strict orders for payment of arrears (21).

But these refractory elements had to be removed from the Nawab's Government. Before long, an opportunity was found to overthrow Nandakumar. On March 10, the members of deputation acquainted the Council that Vansittart who had just arrived from the army had communicated to them "some very corroborative proofs of the treacherous correspondence imputed to Nandakumar in April, 1764". On the 16th, the relevant papers were laid before the Council who assumed the charge against Nandakumar as fully proved. They regarded it absolutely unsafe to allow Nandakumar even the smallest share in the government. Letters were, next day, despatched to the Nawab as also to the deputation to send Nandakumar to Calcutta to stand an enquiry and to transfer the branch of revenue allotted to him to other reliable servants.

On the morning of the 20th, advised by the Nawab, Nandakumar went to Motijhil only to pay a visit to the deputies. They left him there under a guard and came to the Nawab with the Governor's letter. At first, the Nawab agreed to Nandakumar's staying at Motijhil till he heard from Calcutta. The gentlemen were glad at his ready compliance. Many messages, it is said, passed then between Nandakumar and the Nawab. At about 7 P.M. the Nawab sent to them a message insisting that Nandakumar should be sent to him, for he regarded Nandakumar's honour as his own. At break of day he met them and "scarce kept within the bounds of decency" when he reiterated his fondness for Nandakumar and protested against his detention. Nandakumar was then released on condition that the Nawab would himself send him down to Calcutta if the Council persisted in that request and would not in the meantime admit him to his Council (22). In a letter to the Governor, the Nawab now sincerely tried to prove the falsehood of the charge against Nandakumar. It had been, he pointed out, proved baseless in the three previous enquiries of the last year. And, if at all he was to be sent to Calcutta, the Nawab too would accompany him with his household and servants. The English Government were alarmed at such an outburst of affection. It was extremely dangerous that such a man should continue to be

(21) Secret Cons., 16 March 1765; Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. 1, No. 2611).

(22) The Nawab's version was that he begged and entreated the gentlemen, in the most suppliant manner, to release Nandakumar. "At length, they gave in after having made His Excellency give them under his hand whatsoever they desired". (Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. 1, No. 2616).

"the chief adviser and director of this young and unexperienced prince." They repeated their positive orders. At last after much pains the Nawab was made to understand that "there is no difference between the Nizamat and the Company", and Nandakumar was sent to Calcutta a prisoner. Najm-ud-daulah had to yield (23).

The chief obstacle being thus removed, it was now easier for the English Government to fill the revenue offices with their own nominees. Though based on imperfect knowledge, a sketch was drawn up by them for dividing the superintendence of the collections among different people with preference for their friends and proteges. The principal power in the collections in Bihar was in the hands of Dhiraj Narayan and Kittle Dass, the Duans put in by Nundcomer", and the amils had been appointed by Mir Jafar and Nandakumar. A change in the staff was, therefore, requisite. Gopal Krishna, a son of Raja Rajballabh, was recommended for that province. Rai Durlabh's devotion to the English earned for him a good reward. The deputies proposed a large allotment to him. He was also to continue in the office of Nizamat Diwan in which capacity he was in charge of particular collections amounting to about six lakhs of rupees per annum. Upon a supposition that Nandakumar would not be acquitted of the charge, they made enquiries about the most efficient revenue officers. The plan was to assign to each of them a branch of the collections. This division was considered as the safest system. None of these superintendents with their power thus reduced were likely to acquire any improper influence in the country and they might be displaced at any time. The appointment and dismissal of amils, settlement and collection of revenue were to rest with the Nawab as before. The Naib Nazim was to be consulted in adjusting the *band-o-bast* (settlement of revenue) and was, in general, to superintend the whole system and to suggest to the Nawab any necessary amendment.

There was a rumour that Miran's son had procured Sanads for the King's Diwani lands, which were generally assigned to the Padshahi Diwan. Though the deputies could find no trace of his actual enjoyment of such a Sanad, he was proposed to be made harmless by an assignment of Rs. 5,000 per month, settled upon him and his mother without any office but with liberty to reside where they pleased. Jasarat Khan's good services to Mir Jafar and the English, his rank and character made him dear to the English. His name was

(23) Secret Cons., 16 March, 25 March, 1 April, 1765; Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, Nos. 2607, 2614; 2616-17, 2619-20, 2622.

"Mah Rajah Nundcomar", the Nawab later remonstrated to Clive, "my intimate well-wisher, when he has occasion to ask anything, they answer him in the negative and with displeasure. While this man continues in the service, they cannot impose upon me any extraordinary charges. They for the sake of their own profits have censured him with an old accusation, which was long ago strictly examined by General Carnac, and acquitted him of it; and now they maliciously accused him again and by this means they sent him down to Calcutta with a guard of sepoys". (Sel. Com. Progs., 1 June 1765).

Although witnesses were actually summoned, the intended trial did not take place. But Nandakumar was not acquitted. He was detained at Calcutta and entirely excluded from the administration.

now proposed to be the Faujdar of the important frontier province of Purnea in the place of Rah-ud-din Hussain Khan. Of the five or six ill-advisers who, the deputies feared, had the Nawab's confidence and might poison his mind against the English, one was Muzaffar Ali who held the office of Arz-begi. Nandakumar had immense influence over him. Muzaffar Ali and Nandakumar's brother who was in charge of the revenue of Rajshahi were to be dismissed. The Council approved of most of these proposals and the President wrote to the Nawab on this subject with the particular request to transfer the branches under Nandakumar to other hands.(24)

Najm-ud-daulah agreed to all the proposals except one. The strongest representations of the English could not secure his consent to Rai Durlabh's appointment. Rai Durlabh had helped Mir Jafar in his first accession. He was appointed Nizamat Diwan by Mir Jafar and exercised great influence over all affairs.(25) Afterwards they fell out and Rai Durlabh took shelter in Calcutta. In spite of repeated summonses of Mir Jafar, he did not come back to Murshidabad during the latter's life time.(26) Now under the Governor's order he returned to Murshidabad to take over his office. Najm-ud-daulah did not forget the enmity and jealousy that had subsisted between his father and Rai Durlabh. Moreover, a letter from Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh to Rai Durlabh having fallen into his hands, he lost all confidence in the latter. The Council wrote highly of his ability and experience. They did not attach any importance to the Wazir's letter and wanted the Nawab to take it as a stratagem of the Wazir. But the Nawab refused to be convinced. At last the Council ceased insisting on Rai Durlabh's appointment in the department of revenue and hoped that the Nawab would not object if Rai Durlabh held only the office of Nizamat Diwan. Thereupon, the Nawab divided Rai Durlabh's share of the collections among five persons, Gopal Krishna, Hiralal and others.(27) A battalion of sepoy was stationed at Murshidabad under the Resident at the Durbar.

Thus stood the affairs when Clive returned to Bengal as Governor for the second time. At the head of the Select Committee he was endowed with full powers to restore tranquillity and reform abuses that had grown chronic in the Company's affairs in India.

Clive expressed indignation at the Council's hasty selection of a new Nawab and conclusion of a treaty with him without waiting for the Select Committee's approval. He decided, however, to treat the new Nawab with respect and dignity. He arrived in Calcutta on May 3. A close study of the consultations of the Council took only two days to confirm his suspicion about what was so notorious throughout the town. This was the rumour of the receipt of large sums of money by the members of the deputation and

(24) Secret Cons., 25 March, 26 March, 1 April, 1765. (Arz-begi—An officer appointed to receive and present petitions).

(25) He was in charge of the Nazim's jagir, the cavalry, top-khana (arsenal) and shagird-pesh (expenses of servants and dependants) of the Nizamat.

(26) Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, Nos. 2510, 2527, 2539, 2544.

(27) Secret Cons., 9 April, 17 April, 22 April, 1765; Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, Nos. 2623, 2625-28, 2630, 2635-36, 2638.

the Council at the time of Najm-ud-daulah's accession. This receipt of present, if it was true, was contrary to the positive orders of the Court of Directors, which ran to the effect that the Company's servants should execute covenants restraining them from accepting, directly or indirectly, from the Indian Princes any grant of lands, rents or territorial dominion or any present whatever, exceeding the value of four thousand rupees without the consent of the Directors.(28) Clive only waited for the arrival of the Nawab and his ministry.

In Murshidabad, Najm-ud-daulah's life had been made miserable since his father's death. The contemptuous treatment by the deputies along with Reza Khan's appointment as the virtual head of the administration tormented him. Day and night, he was, as it were, "in a flame". As soon as he received the news of Clive's return, he set out for Calcutta in the hope of redress. Reza Khan and Rai Durlabh wanted to accompany him, but he did not give them his permission. A few days later, like the Seth brothers they also started for Calcutta in all haste.(29)

The Nawab delivered a petition to the Select Committee, bitterly complaining of the insulting behaviour of the members of the deputation, who had totally ignored the instructions left by his deceased father, forced Reza Khan and a treaty upon him against his wishes, maliciously accused Nandakumar, his intimate well-wisher, and sent him away to Calcutta under a guard. He also charged Reza Khan with embezzling twenty lakhs of rupees in money and goods from the Murshidabad treasury "for the better securing his Naibship". And there was a balance due from Reza Khan of about twenty lakhs of rupees on account of Dacca, Sylhet and Roshanabad, of which he had not paid a single cowrie.

How the Nawab was reduced to a nonentity was then described. Reza Khan in collaboration with Johnstone, Leycester and Rai Durlabh took possession of 'muchalka' papers, affixed the Nawab's seal under his own seal and left nothing to be done at the Nawab's will or order. Titles, employments, khilats, elephants, horses and jewels were distributed according to Reza Khan's sweet will. And what was the condition of the revenue? There was a balance due to the Government from the ziladars (district officers) of fifteen lakhs of rupees and yet new employments were granted to them. Lands were divided, the current year's rents and the Punyaha (30) were disposed of in a way they pleased. The treasury was so depleted that before coming to Calcutta, the Nawab was much distressed for money for paying wages to his servants and other necessary expenses.

(28) The Court's orders left England in June 1764 and reached Calcutta on 24 January, 1765. The Council met on the next day, treated it with silent contempt by making no allusion at all. More than three months had elapsed, yet the covenants were not signed. In fact, this delay and the subsequent presents reflect light on each other.

(29) Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, Nos. 2643, 2645-46, 2650-52, 2655; Clive's letter to General Carnac, 20 May 1765 (Malcolm, Life of Robert, Lord Clive, vol. II, p. 358).

(30) The day on which the rent payers assembled and the revenue for the ensuing year was settled.

The Nawab humbly appealed to the Select Committee to put his affairs on a proper footing. So public a complaint could not be ignored. On the facts before them, the Select Committee held unanimously that Reza Khan had distributed nearly twenty lakhs of rupees among "certain persons".⁽³¹⁾ The Committee, therefore, instituted an inquiry.

Reza Khan was called upon to account for this large disbursement from the treasury. His narratives threw a flood of light on the circumstances in which the deputies received presents separately from the Nawab and himself. Enquiry was also made of Jagat Seth who described how a large sum was extorted from him by intimidation. It appeared from the narratives of Reza Khan and Jagat Seth and the deposition of one Basanta Rai connected with the transaction that Motiram, Faujdar of Hugli, was employed by Johnstone and greatly concerned in these pecuniary transactions. He also was examined at length by the Committee.

These accounts showed that after the Nawab's accession Johnstone sent to Reza Khan a message through Motiram that the English gentlemen expected presents from the Nawab, since they had placed him on the masnad. Reza Khan reported this to the Nawab. Under their earnest pressure, the Nawab gave Rs. 875,000 to the nine gentlemen from the 12th April to the 1st May: Rs. 250,000 by four bills upon the House of the Seths, and the remaining Rs. 625,000 in ready money from the treasury.

As regards the presents he himself gave, Reza Khan narrated how the suggestion that he should give the gentlemen some presents for his appointment as Naib Subah was pressed on him by Motiram. At first he replied that he would do what was in his power, but would not be able to give much; thereupon Motiram came again and told him that the gentlemen were offended with him. So, to please them he gave them two notes for Rs. 475,000. The first note was meant for Rs. 400,000 to be divided equally among Johnstone, Senior, Middleton and Leycester. The second note for Rs. 75,000 was unknown to other gentlemen. It was given secretly—Rs. 50,000 for Johnstone and Rs. 25,000 for his younger brother G. Johnstone. Out of Rs. 475,000, he paid Rs. 225,000 and the rest remained due. Reza Khan's second statement showed that he had given another sum of Rs. 90,000 to Spencer in the regime of Mir Jafar and thereafter.

Jagat Seth also stated that these gentlemen had asked him through Motiram to give them presents so that they would settle all his business according to his heart's desire, otherwise they would be displeased and would not assist him. Finding him unwilling, they threatened that if he "wished to have the business go freely on", he must give presents. "Being remedile, he consented to give Rs. 125,000. Of this, he sent Rs. 50,000 immediately and the rest remained due."⁽³²⁾

After due enquiries the Select Committee declared these English gentlemen guilty, in varying degrees, of actual disobedience to the Company for

(31) Sel. Com. Progs., 1 June, 1765.

(32) Sel. Com. Progs., 6 June, 8 June, 4 July, 1765; Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, No. 2667.

receiving presents in contravention of its express orders. Johnstone had, the Committee unanimously held, actually received the several sums in money and bills specified in the accounts of Reza Khan and Jagat Seth, and also had been a principal agent and manager in obtaining and distributing the presents. Senior, Leycester and Middleton had received the money specified in the accounts, but they neither authorised the messages delivered by Motiram nor were active in obtaining the presents which they believed to be voluntary, and Middleton always intended to refuse the present offered for him by Reza Khan. As regards the bill of Rs. 50,000 taken by Motiram from Reza Khan on behalf of Leycester, the Committee were convinced that the latter had neither received nor intended to receive the sum. It was privately tendered back to Reza Khan by Motiram himself. About the Councillors, Playdell, Burdett and Gray, it was admitted that they had each received Rupees 50,000 from the Nawab in the belief that it was a free gift to them, without any solicitation on their part or demand on the Nawab for services performed. The single person exonerated from all allegation was Cartier who had evidently no knowledge of any demand made in his name and would have refused the lakh of rupees intended for him by the Nawab, had it ever been tendered to him.(33)

The sums stated against their names were as noted below:—

	Najm-ul-daulah	Reza Khan	Jagat Seth	Total
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Spencer	... 100,000	90,000	...	190,000
2. Playdell	... 50,000	...	...	50,000
3. Burdett	... 50,000	...	...	50,000
4. Gray	... 50,000	...	...	50,000
5. Senior	... 112,500	50,000	10,000	172,500
6. Middleton	... 112,500	...	10,000	122,500
6. Middleton	... 112,500	...	10,000	122,500
7. Leycester	... 112,500	...	10,000	122,500
8. J. J. Johnstone	... 237,500	100,000	10,000	347,500
9. G. Johnstone	... 50,000	25,000	10,000	85,000
	<u>875,000</u>	<u>265,000</u>	<u>50,000</u>	<u>1,190,000</u>

Besides these sums, it appeared that several lakhs of rupees were procured from Nandakumar and Rai Durlabh each of whom aspired at and was promised that very office which was predetermined in favour of Reza Khan.(34)

(33) Sel. Com. Progs., 21 June 1765.

Curiously enough, no comment was made against Governor Spencer who received the sum of Rs. 1,90,000, the second only to Johnstone's.

(34) The whole matter was referred to the Directors. According to their orders, based on the opinions of the King's Attorney, Solicitor-General and others, the Select Committee asked the accused gentlemen to refund the money they had unduly

The inculpated gentlemen, however, tried to justify the receipt of presents by arguments which rendered their conduct more culpable. Acceptance of presents, Leycester argued, was sanctified by the custom of the country and the sole author of the address from the Nawab was Nandakumar. He denied having received a single rupee from Reza Khan and remonstrated that the Nawab should apologise for his insulting and unbecoming language. The former Presidents, said Gray, had set the example by accepting such presents themselves. The Government could very well afford to make this present. Burdett declared that no Committee had any power to try him on this charge unless they were specially empowered to do so. Johnstone who had been exposed as the principal actor in the whole episode boldly retorted that they had only followed Clive as guide, who through Mir Jafar's bounty had made his fortune easy. Middleton affirmed that at the time of receiving the presents he had no conception of being guilty of a breach of trust, for he had neither executed the covenants nor received either public or private information of their arrival.

Their common argument was that these covenants could not be obligatory as they were not then executed. In fact, they had already reached Calcutta ready for execution. It was, therefore, an act of gross disobedience not to put them in force. But apart from these covenants, they were guilty of a breach of trust and contempt of the authority of their employers, for receipt of donations was never lawful without the Court's sanction. In vindication of their conduct, the gentlemen stated that they had agreed to receive the presents as voluntary gifts only after the earnest requests of the donors. They were not aware of any menace, request or solicitation on their part.(35)

But these vast sums were by no means free gifts. The dependent condition of the minor Nawab and his timid Naib was itself a refutation of the plea; the Nawab's letter to Clive and the Select Committee, with the corroborative statements of the Seths and Reza Khan, and the depositions of Basanta Rai and Motiram clearly proved that these had been exacted as the price of protection. Also, the Company was engaged in a war which cost it from ten to twelve lakhs of rupees per month, for which the Nawab had stipulated to pay no more than five lakhs monthly and even that fell into arrears. The Nawab was at the same time pressed for payment of the remaining thirty lakhs for restitution, besides other unlawful demands on him.

Vainly did the gentlemen strive to justify their conduct with a vigour and audacity worthy of a better cause, there is no denying the fact that throughout the whole transaction one thought pervaded their minds and that was how to make the best bargain for themselves. It seemed to "demonstrate", wrote the Select Committee, "that every spring of this government was

obtained from Najm-ud-daulah, Reza Khan and Jagat Seth. Vide Letter to Court, 30 Sept. 1765; Letter from Court, 17 May 1766; Sel. Com. Progs., 21 Dec. 1766.

(35) For minutes of Leycester, Playdell, Burdett, Gray, Johnstone, Senior and Middleton, vide Sel. Com. Progs., 21 June 1765, 18 Sept. 1765, 16 Jan. 1767; Public consultations, 7 June, 11 June, 17 June, 1765.

smeared with corruption, that principles of rapacity and oppression universally prevailed, and that every spark of sentiment and public spirit was lost and extinguished in the unbounded lust of unmerited wealth".(36)

Re-organisation of the Murshidabad Government was also called for. Of the Nawab, Clive formed a poor opinion. The more he saw the Nawab, the more he was convinced of his incapacity for work. His ignorance only enhanced the difficulties of his ministers. He was not only young but also very simple-minded. Clive was shocked to see "what a set of miserable and mean wretches Nundcomar had placed about him, men that the other day were horse-keepers." It appeared to Clive that there had been an unholy combination between the blacks and the whites for dividing all the revenue between them, and the Nawab was kept ignorant of all this. Large sums had been taken out of the treasury by Reza Khan at Murshidabad and by Nandakumar at Calcutta. A very large amount was due to the merchants on account of restitution and the monthly payments to the Company were several lakhs in arrears. Clive was unwilling to restore Nandakumar to power. "Although", he wrote to Carnac, "Nundcomar may not prove guilty of the crime laid to his charge, yet, believe me, my dear General, he will do no honour, either to the Nabob or to the Company in any great or eminent post; which he never was formed or designed for". He was also averse to Reza Khan's continuance in the Naib Nazim's office and observed, "His being a Mussulman, acute and clever, are reasons of themselves, if there were no others, against trusting that man with too much power."(37)

As a matter of fact, an unlimited authority in the hands of any individual appeared dangerous to the new establishment. The Nawab also was highly dissatisfied with the plenary powers vested in the Naib Subah. Despite his accusations, Reza Khan was not dismissed, "so openly and candidly has he accounted to the Select Committee for every rupee disbursed from the treasury." He had, of course, to relinquish a part of his authority. With a view to producing the "perfect equilibrium of influence" Rai Durlabh and Jagat Seth Khushal Chand, both adherents of the English, were associated with him with an equal power, so that each became a check on the conduct of the others.

According to the new regulations, Reza Khan became Naib Nazim, Rai Durlabh Diwan, and Jagat Seth Khushal Chand and Maharaja Udwat Chand were to act as chiefs of trade. The appointment and dismissal of faujdars, amils and other officers and the management of the revenue were to be in their hands. They were to maintain the requisite number of cavalry and infantry and all unnecessary expenses were to be reduced. They were also asked to remove from the Court all mischievous men and evil advisers. Whenever the Nawab's Government would fail to maintain peace or the

(36) Letter to Court, 30 Sept., 1765.

(37) Clive's letters to General Carnac, dated 20 May, 27 May, 30 May, 1765. (Life of Robert, Lord Clive, vol. II, pp. 358-361).

A certain clique, it is said, at the head of which was Carnac, was anxious that Nandakumar should replace Reza Khan.

ministers would be unable to act amicably the matter was to be referred to the Governor for proper steps. After necessary disbursements, the surplus was to be deposited in the public treasury under the care of Reza Khan, Rai Durlabh and Jagat Seth, in such a way that neither of them might be able to take out any money without the consent of the other two. For the preservation of harmony and "the care of Nawab's affairs and the Company's money" a member of the Council was to reside at Murshidabad. He would draw a suitable monthly allowance from the treasury and examine monthly the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Government.(38)-

The regulations drawn up, Clive left Calcutta on the 25th June and halted at Motijhil near Murshidabad. Here he found the new system in danger. The plan was that the three ministers should never interfere in each other's authority. But Rai Durlabh was over-stepping his limits by claiming the right of nominating the revenue officers and Reza Khan was yielding too readily to his encroachments. Sykes was therefore sent to Murshidabad, as the deputy of the Select Committee, to restore the balance of power. The secret of the passive behaviour of Reza Khan was revealed only after some days. The timidity of Reza Khan and Jagat Seth was well-known. Now Kaim Beg, a common enemy of both, had frightened them so much by his frequent threats, that they became totally inactive and left everything to be done by Rai Durlabh. Did Kaim Beg behave so on his own initiative? Or was he instigated by the Nawab or Nandakumar? Clive could not actually determine. But he did not think it safe to leave Kaim Beg at large. So he was taken into custody and sent to Calcutta.(39) By the 9th July, new regulations were duly signed, ministers were acting in harmony and a Sanad was obtained for the reversion of Clive's jagir in perpetuity to the Company.

Clive's business at the Murshidabad Durbar was over. He now left for the up-country on a very significant mission. On receipt of the news of Mir Jafar's death as also the success of the British arms against Shuja-ud-daulah, Clive had devised in his own mind a scheme for the three provinces to be governed by the English under the direct authority of the Emperor. He would have chosen the infant son of Miran for the empty throne of Murshidabad. Frustrated for the moment by the hasty action of the Calcutta Council, Clive could see that it was not yet too late. Continuous struggles for superiority between the agents of the Nawab and the Company, together with the recent proofs of extortion and corruption, confirmed his decisions. He resolved to reintroduce with certain modifications the system which had prevailed in these provinces from the time of the Emperor Akbar and which, therefore, had the sanction of ancient usage. According to this system the responsibility for defence, maintenance of the public peace and administration of criminal law of the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa rested with the Nawab Wazir, while a Diwan had the charge of the collection of the revenue, expenditure of the Government money and dispensation of civil justice.

(38) Sel. Com. Progs., 21 June, 1765.

(39) Sel. Com. Progs., 7 July, 10 August, 1765; Calendar of Persian Correspondence, vol. I, No. 2671.

Twice before, in 1758 and 1761, the Court of Delhi had offered to confer on the Company the Diwani of Bengal on condition of its being answerable for the royal revenues, but the English had prudently declined that offer in order to avoid any jealousy or ill feeling between the Company and the Nawabs of Bengal. But the circumstances had changed. A young and ignorant Nawab had been "seated" on the masnad of Bengal, Delhi was in the Afghan hands and Oudh prostrate before the English. The Mughal Emperor was only a homeless wanderer—a dependant on the Company's favour. Now was the time for negotiating with the Emperor for the Diwani of Bengal, the Select Committee wrote to Clive. Clive too felt that the Company should now act as the Diwan of the Emperor and the revenues of Bengal should be spent in maintaining the army, meeting other necessary expenses and paying the Emperor's tribute and an annuity of Rupees fifty lakhs to the Nawab for all his expenses.⁽⁴⁰⁾

Negotiations with the Nawab presented no difficulty. The huge expenses of the army, the large sums due for restitution and to the navy, together with the annual tribute to be paid to the Emperor—all these were pointed out to him and the Nawab agreed to Clive's proposal. Before his departure, Clive commissioned Sykes to adjust with the Nawab the particulars of the settlement. Sykes first tried to get an idea of the Nawab's immediate expenses. His next object was to convince the Nawab about his own difficulties as also those he would create in the government on account of his ignorance, and thus to persuade the Nawab to accept his proposals. The Nawab represented that the annuity of fifty lakhs was not really sufficient for his expenditure on sawari (retinue), sepoy, household affairs, Munni Begum, families of his brothers and other personal matters. Sykes admitted that the Nawab's demand was not unreasonable. Clive had himself seen that his expenses exceeded this sum.

It was, therefore, settled with Najm-ud-daulah that he would accept a stipend of sicca Rs. 5,386,131 per annum and make over all the affairs of government to Reza Khan, Rai Durlabh and Jagat Seth and the management of the Subahdari to the Company. Sykes also procured from the Nawab 106 parwanas for trade in salt, betel-nut and tobacco which enabled the Company to enter immediately into contracts. The three ministers—Reza Khan, Rai Durlabh and Jagat Seth were placed in charge of the stipends of the Nawab's mother, brothers and Miran's son. They were also to make payments to the Nawab's sepoy, horse, servants and others.⁽⁴²⁾ "Roy Dullub must be watched and not suffered to pilfer, steal, extort or

(40) Sel. Com. Progs., 21 June 1765; 10 August, 1765.

(41) According to Clive, the Nawab received with infinite pleasure the proposal of having a sum of money for his personal expenses at his own disposal, and exclaimed, "Thanks God! I shall now have as many dancing girls as I please!" Life of Robert, Lord Clive, vol. III, pp. 124-125).

But this exultation seems rather inconsistent with the Nawab's demands on Sykes to enhance the proposed allowance as also Sykes' efforts in dealing with him only a few days later.

(42) Sel. Com. Progs., 10 August 1765, Letter to Court, 31 Jan, 1766. Actually, Reza Khan alone was entrusted with this responsibility.

oppress", Clive wrote to Sykes from Benares. But Sykes was convinced that Rai Durlabh had realised his error and would give no cause for further complaint.

Meanwhile, Clive was proceeding up the river and met Shuja-ud-daulah at Benares. The Nawab Wazir's armies had been repeatedly defeated and his capital taken. He was eager for peace. On the 2nd August Clive had an interview with him and settled the conditions of restoring his dominion and hastened to Allahabad to meet the Emperor Shah Alam II. The Emperor who had entered the British camp a fugitive now began to make numerous demands. Since Mir Jafar's death not a single dam had been paid. His Majesty insisted on five lakhs and a half in jagir according to his engagements with Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim. Acceptance of his demand might lead to endless political complications. He was, therefore, persuaded to withdraw it. Next, he asked for the arrears of Rupees thirtytwo lakhs due to him from Mir Jafar, Mir Kasim and Najm-ud-daulah. In answer, absolute impossibility was pleaded of paying even one rupee due to the insolvency of the treasury. The Emperor was displeased. But Clive was steady in his terms and the Emperor acquiesced at last.

It was finally settled on August 11 that Emperor would receive an annuity of twenty-six lakhs of rupees as his revenue from Bengal. Kora and Allahabad were also ceded to him as a royal demesne for maintaining his dignity. Clive and Carnac then presented two petitions to the Emperor for granting the Nizamat of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to Najm-ud-daulah and the Diwan of these provinces to the Company. Both the petitions received His Majesty's sanction.

On August 12, 1765, the Emperor took his seat not on the famous Mughal throne, made of gold and inlaid with priceless gems, but on an arm chair covered with some drapery, standing on an English dining table in Clive's tent. The Imperial Farman was read, executed and handed over to Clive by His Majesty. It conferred upon the Company in perpetuity the Diwani authority over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Company had to be the security for the regular payment by the Nawab of the sum of twenty-six lakhs of rupees a year as the royal revenue. As the Company had to maintain a large army for the protection of these provinces, the Farman granted to it whatever surplus might remain out of their revenues, after remitting twenty-six lakhs to the Emperor and providing for the expenses of the Nizamat. This Farman was followed by an Agreement, dated August 19, between the Nawab of Bengal and the Emperor in which the same provisions were agreed upon.⁽⁴³⁾

Thus, a momentous transaction was concluded, as Ghulam Husain puts it, "in less time than would have been taken up for sale of a jack ass, or of a beast of burden, or of a head of a cattle".⁽⁴⁴⁾ The supreme contro-

The English Government was so satisfied with the negotiations that Sykes was ordered to give a suitable present to the Nawab.

(43) Sel. Com. Progs., 7 Sept., 1765, Public Cons., 9 Sept., 1765; Letter to Court 30 Sept. 1765; Aitchison's Treaties, vol. II, pp. 241-244.

(44) Seir-ul-Mutaqherin, vol. III, p. 9.

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over the administration in Bengal had long before passed into the hands of the Company. What was wanting was a constitutional form—a title. This was now furnished by the Imperial Farman. "Por absurdity", as it was, it counted for much.

Under the Agreement with the Company, dated September 30, the Nawab consented to accept the annual sum of Rs. 5,386,131-9-0 as an adequate allowance for the support of the Nizamat and this was not to be exceeded on no account. It was to be regularly paid to him as follows: (a) the sum of sicca rupees 1,778,854-1-0 for all his household expenses, servants and others, and (b) the remaining sum of Rs. 3,607-277-8-0 for the maintenance of such horse, sepoy, peons, barkandazes as might be thought necessary for his sawari and for his dignity, provided, however, that no expense was found necessary to be kept up in future. Again, it was proposed to the Nawab that he should dismiss "the useless rabble" of mughal and foot and accept in their place 1,000 or 1,500 of the Company's soldiers. Thereby there was a saving to the Company of eighteen lakh of rupees which could be deducted from the sum of Rs. 3,607-277-8-0 of the Nawab's stipend. The Nawab is said to have acquiesced in this proposal from a conviction that this would promote his own ease, the country's peace and the Company's interest.

Henceforth, no future Nawab would have power or riches sufficient to overthrow the Company's possessions. While the Nawab had the collections in his hand, the means of maintaining the Company's military establishment depended on his sweet will. His payments were often unpunctual and deficient. His revenues were either withheld by zaminders or dissipated in profusion. So the Company was frequently disappointed of necessary supplies even in the most critical situations. But henceforth there would remain no short of two crores to the Company, clear of all expenses in collections. The Nawab would certainly help the English to secure their commerce and territorial possessions and keep the Nawab in bondage. Earlier in the year, Najib-ud-daulah had concluded a treaty, by which the military defence of the country had devolved on the English Government. After the Company's acquisition of the Diwani the military dependence of the Nawab was completed.

A decade had not passed since the day when Siraj-ud-daulah crushed the Hugli to crush the English merchants of Calcutta. And the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa became, "with his free will and consent, a pensioner without any authority in any sphere of government except criminal administration."

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(45) Sel. Com. Progs., 7 Sept. 1765; Pub. Cons., 9 Sept. 1765; Aitchison's Treaties, vol. II, pp. 244-245.

The Select Committee could see no reason why the Nawab should not be satisfied, for a fund was "secured to him, without trouble or danger, adequate to the purposes of such grandeur and happiness as a man of his sentiments has a conception of enjoying; more would serve only to disturb his quiet, endanger his government" (Letter to Court, 30 Sept. 1765).

SPEAKING of the horrid rite of Sati, a modern historian has observed that its endurance for centuries among such an intelligent and cultured people as the Indians illustrates in a striking manner how "faith in a supermundane existence, instead of elighting and purifying the ideas and sentiments of man at times warps his judgment and paralyses his noble instincts and human feelings." The same thing perhaps may also be said of the practice of infanticide, which prevailed in Bengal nearly a hundred and fifty years ago. Human sacrifice, especially the sacrifice of children, was prevalent over a large part of the ancient world. The preliminary discourse of Sale's "Koran" affords information of the existence of infanticide in Arabia. Before the rise of Islam, the pagan Arabs, particularly those of the Koreish and the Kendah tribes, buried their infant daughters alive lest they should be reduced to poverty by providing for them or else to avoid the disgrace, which would follow if they should happen to be made captives or to become scandalous by their behaviour. Some Arabs again sacrificed some of their children to their idols in satisfaction of a vow they used to make that if they had a certain number of sons born they would offer one of them in sacrifice. (1) Recent excavations in Palestine have proved the existence of infanticide among the ancient Canaanites. (2) In ancient Sparta, by the Law of Lycurgus, no child was allowed to be brought up without the approbation of the heads of the tribe, the weak and unhealthy ones being exposed to die on the wild slopes of Mt. Taygetus. (3) C. Bailey writes in his "Legacy of Rome" that until the time of Constantine, when the influence of Christian ethics was being strongly felt, no serious steps were taken to make illegal the action of a father, who decided after the birth of a child that he would not bring it up himself but expose it to die or meet any other fate it might come by at the hands of some chance finder. (4) Jacob Bryant tells us in his *Annual Register* that the Carthaginians, the mortal enemies of Rome also offered human sacrifices to their deity, the Kromus, and especially the blood of children was considered to be the most pleasing to that god. (5) The practise of child sacrifice was prevalent also among the native tribes of America, some of the African tribes like the Bushman and also in New Zealand and the South Sea islands. (6) In China, as late as

(1) George Sale—*The Koran. Preliminary Discourse. Sec. V.* Pages 93-94.

(2) Hall—*The Ancient History of the Near East* (1952 edn.) Page 442.

(3) Bury—*A History of Greece* (1955). Page 132.

(4) C. Bailey—*The Legacy of Rome* (Oxford, 1923). Page 214.

(5) Jacob Bryant—*Annual Register: Vol. X* (1767).

(6) J. Peggs—*The Present State of Infanticide in India* (London, 1844). Pages 16-17.

the 19th century, the poorer sort of people frequently put their children, especially the female ones, to death, but this was done primarily for economic reasons. (7) Similarly the practice was prevalent among the ancient Hindus, through it was not enjoined by any religious scriptures at all.

It is extremely difficult to determine the antiquity of the practice of infanticide in India. In the Mahabharata there is only one instance of child sacrifice, namely, the sacrifice of the first seven sons of Shantanu by their mother Gangadevi. (8) The Institutes of Manu condemn all incantations and magic rites intended to destroy life and prohibit the wanton killing of even birds and beasts. (9) The Kalika Purana, written under Tantric influence in the 12th/13th centuries, commends human sacrifice as an extremely beneficial act, but expressly forbids the sacrifice of women and children below the age of twelve. (10) The story of King Harischandra's sacrifice of his only son, as recorded in Ruparam's Dharmamangala (1649-'50), is, however, only a distant echo of the story of Rohita-Shunahsef in the Aitareya Brahmana and perhaps does nothing more than assert that there is hardly anything in this life too precious or sacred to be exempted from being devoted to the service of the Almighty. (11) On the whole, the doctrines of Hindu religion have nowhere encouraged the practice of infanticide as a religious duty, but yet here as in the cases of many other barbarous social rites, the hold of superstition has proved itself stronger than the hold of religion on public mind.

Though the practice of infanticide has been prevalent in different parts of India for a pretty long time, yet its origin and nature have not been the same everywhere. To examine how the practice varied from place to place and from people to people will be an interesting study indeed. In the first place, the practice of infanticide was widely prevalent among the Rajputs and the Jats of northern and Central India and the Jahrejas of Cutch and Kathiawar, but here the practice had nothing to do with religion. Infanticide among the Rajputs and other allied races originated from the inordinate pride of family, entertained by these peoples, and joined to the difficulty of procuring suitable matches for their females and the prospect of dishonour, which was likely to result from the latter's living in a single state. A Rajput father could not get his daughter married with any one of his own clan, nor could he think of degrading himself by contracting matrimonial alliance with an inferior clan, and so in order to get out of this difficulty he thought it better to put his daughter to death while it was still an infant. (12) The practice was, however, never imputed to a divine origin. No god com-

(7) George Sale—vide ante.

(8) Mahabharatam (Adi Parva)—Edited by Haridas Siddhantavagish (Cal., 1338 B.S.). Pages 1092-1093.

(9) Sacred Books of the East—edited by Maxmuller, Vol. XXV. Ch. IX. Sl. 290 and Ch. XI. Sl. 132-145.

(10) Kalika Purana—Bengali translation by Durga Charan Banerjee. Chap. 67.

(11) Ruparamer Dharmamangal, Part I. Edited by Dr. Sukumar Sen and Panchanan Mandal. Pages 75-86.

(12) Pegga—vide ante, Pages 24-29.

to bring up many children. The practice, it is clear, arose out of purely secular considerations and had nothing to do with religion. (15) In the third place, infanticide and human sacrifice were prevalent among the Khonds of Gumsur in Orissya and other kindred tribes, and here it was really due to some sort of religious superstition. Infanticide was often resorted to in order to propitiate some angry god or malevolent spirit or to have bumper harvests. These savage tribes, who lived in the hills, frequently purchased children or kidnapped them during their marauding raids in the low country, organised specially for this purpose. But they usually preferred male children for performing the sacrifice. According to Mr. Brown, the master of the English school in Cuttack, the Khonds thought it much better to steal or even purchase grown up females for purpose of marriage than to bear the expense of bringing them up from infancy. (16) If this be true, then female infanticide, as practised among the Rajputs and the Jats was also not unknown to the savage Khonds of Orissa.

Finally, we come to the practice of infanticide in Bengal, which was somewhat different from all the three types of sacrifice, referred to above. The main form of infanticide, which prevailed in Bengal, has been aptly described by the Rev. W. Ward in his famous book "View of the History, Literature and Religion of the Hindus." Ward writes thus:—"The people in some parts of India, particularly the inhabitants of Orissya and the eastern parts of Bengal frequently offer their children to the goddess Gunga. The following reason has been assigned for this practice. When a woman has been long married and has no children, it is common for the man or his wife or both of them to make a vow to the goddess Gunga that if she will bestow the blessing of children upon them, they will devote the first born

(13) J. W. Kaye—Administration of the East India Company London, 1853). Page 552.

(14) J. Peggs—vide ante Pages 25-27.

(15) Friend of India. Vol. II, September, 1819. Pages 420-425,

(16) J. Peggs—vide ante. Pages 22-24.

to her. If after this vow, they have children, the eldest is nourished till a proper age, which may be three, four or nine years, according to circumstances; and on a particular day appointed for bathing in any holy part of the river they take the child with them and offer it to this goddess; the child is encouraged to go further and further into the water till it is carried away by the stream or is pushed off by its inhuman parents. Sometimes a stranger seizes the child and brings it up; but it is abandoned by its parents from the moment it floats in the water; and if no one be found more human than they it infallibly perishes! The principal places in Bengal, where this species of murder is practised are Gungasaugur . . . Vaidyuvathee, Trivinee, Nuddeya, Chakduh and Prayag or Allahabad." (17) The most sacred place for this sort of sacrifice was, however, Gangasagar, where the Ganges joins with the sea, and the most auspicious dates for this purpose were the full moon days in November and January. (18) Rabindranath makes use of this pseudo-religious practice to avail himself of a theme for his pathetic verse tale, entitled 'Devatar Gras'. (19) It will, however, be quite apparent to the reader that this practice differed essentially from the custom of child murder in northern and Central India. In Bengal the sacrifices were consummated in fulfilment of a vow and were thanks-offerings in return for a favourable response to the prayers for offspring with which childless women had wearied their gods, when the curse of barrenness seemed to press heavily upon them. But among the Rajputs it was nothing of a religious sacrifice, but was simply a matter of convenience, the outcome of a desire to lessen the number of children and that also in a rough and ready manner. An eyewitness's account of the practice of infanticide at Gangasagar may be found in the deposition of Mr. C. Starling, a mate in the Pilot Service, delivered before Mr. C. F. Martyr, one of the Justices of the Peace in Calcutta. The deponent, who was present at the place of sacrifice on the day of the full moon in the month of November, 1801, states that he learnt from a fakir on the spot that if a women had four children she ought to put one of them into the water to be destroyed by the sharks with the hope that the three other children should live. Starling saw there altogether eleven men, women and lads destroyed by the sharks. He heard that a boy was to be put into the water to be devoured by the sharks. He waited there in his boat in order to save the boy, but no body was put into the water while the boat was there. A copy of this deposition is enclosed in a report, dated February 18, 1802, sent by the magistrates of Calcutta to the Hon. G. H. Barlow, the Vice-President of the Governor General's Council. From this report we learn that not only children but also aged men and women were sacrificed at Gangasagar, which was considered to be a very sacred place, but in the latter's case the sacrifice was completely voluntary. Even in the case of children, the report states, it had become for the most part a mere ceremony

(17) Ward—View of the History, Literature and Religion of the Hindus (1817), Vol. II. Pages 122-123.

(18) Parliamentary Papers—House of Commons, 1824, Vol. XXIII. Page 134. Extract Bengal Judicial Consultations, 18th February, 1802.

(19) Rabindranath Tagore—Katha-o-Kahini.

and the children though thrown into the Ganges in conformity to the vow of their parents were "generally if not uniformly rescued from destruction." The practice was confined to the eastern districts of Bengal and was little countenanced by the religious orders or by the great body of people, who on the contrary thought it a pious and meritorious act to rescue a child from destruction and afterwards to adopt and maintain it at their own expense. (20) Sometimes again, the childless mother, in order to avoid the prospective grief of parting with her offspring took the vow of devoting not the first but the fifth child to the Ganges, if she was blessed with so many children at all. (21) In some cases, however, the dictates of bigotry prevailed over the sentiments and feelings of nature, for the report of the Calcutta magistrates itself tells us the story of the tragic sacrifice of a boy of twelve, who after being thrown into the Ganges tried to save himself by swimming, but was again pushed into the water and drowned by his own parents. (22)

Besides the practice of sacrificing children in the Ganges there were several other forms of infanticide in Bengal, which though less frequent in occurrence were even more detestable. Ward himself has given us an account of a peculiar form of infanticide, which prevailed principally in the northern districts of Bengal. He writes:—"If an infant refuses the mother's breast and declines in health it is said to be under the influence of some malignant spirit. Such a child is sometimes put into a basket and hung up in a tree, where the evil spirit is supposed to reside. It is generally destroyed by ants or birds of prey; but sometimes perishes by neglect though fed and clothed daily. If it should not be dead at the expiration of three days, the mother receives and nurses it again, but this seldom happens. The late Mr. Thomas, a Missionary, once saved and restored to its mother an infant, which had fallen out of a basket at Bholahat near Maldah at the moment a jackel was running away with it. As this gentleman and Mr. Carey were afterwards passing under the same tree they found a basket hanging in the branches containing the skeleton of another infant, which had been devoured by ants." (23) The incident, referred to above, took place in 1794, as Mr. George Smith informs us in his 'Life of William Carey.' (24) In the Extract Proceedings of the Nizamat Adalat, dated the 23rd January, 1794, we come across the report of a very interesting case in which a mother was accused of drowning in the river Ajay, at the Jaunt Ghat in Birbhum, her own daughter, who had been suffering from a loathsome and incurable disease for a pretty long time. Though the mother finally pleaded not guilty, yet in the mofussil deposition she had admitted that she had been goaded on by her sister to fling her diseased child into the water, and that her own parents had refused to eat and drink with her on account of her child's disease. The Court finally deemed the mother highly culpable, but yet "in consideration of the well-known practice which heretofore prevailed very

(20) Parliamentary Papers, *vide ante*. Page 134.

(21) Harihar Seth—Puratani (Chandannagar, 1335 B.S.). Page 11.

(22) Parliamentary Papers—*vide ante*. Pages 134-135.

(23) Ward—*vide ante*. Pages 122-123.

(24) George Smith—The Life of William Carey (London 1885). Page 281.

generally in this country of people afflicted with the disease in question either drowning themselves or being deprived of life by their relations," thought it incumbent "to pay some regard to the remains of ancient prejudices," which they trusted would in time be wholly eradicated. The guilty mother was imprisoned for one year only and then released. (25)

In the next place, as it is well known to-day, the practice of human sacrifice had become fairly widespread in mediaeval Bengal under the influence of Tantricism. Though the Kalika Purana prohibited the sacrifice of children below twelve, yet this injunction was perhaps not infrequently violated, as it was not always easy to procure able bodied adult males for the purpose of sacrifice. This practice of sacrificing children to please the deity or to avert some threatened calamity lingered on for a long time even after the suppression of infanticide at Gangasagar, though in the 19th Century such sacrifices were very rare. Hunter writes in his *Annals of Rural Bengal* (1868) that in seasons of scarcity the priests of lower Bengal still offered up children to "the insatiable demon, who terrified the forest tribes three thousand years ago." During 1865-'66 such sacrifices were made in order to avert a famine, though they were few in number and were soon suppressed due to police vigilance. Those, who indulged in this sort of sacrifice, did not even spare the votaries of other religions and Hunter tells us in his book of the sacrifice of a seven year old Muhammadan boy in the temple of Kali at Lakhipasa in Jessore. (26) Westland in his 'Report on Jessore', however, states that this murder had nothing to do with the temple and that most likely the body of a boy otherwise murdered had been, to divert inquiry, laid at the door of the temple. (27) Another case of child sacrifice at Hooghly was reported in the *Englishman* on the 19th May, 1866. Human sacrifice for the purpose of procuring early rains was prevalent among the Santal tribes in the southwest of Birbhum, and this recalls to our mind the similar practice prevalent among the Khonds of Gumsur in Orissa. (28)

Besides the three forms of infanticide, which we have already discussed, there was yet another, prevalent in the Bengalee society of the late 18th and the early 19th centuries. This was the destruction of illegitimate children, born of unmarried mothers and of married Kulin girls, deserted by their husbands. Of course, this practice was not something peculiar to the age or the clime and in England itself, the crime was painfully on the increase in the mid-19th century, as testified to by judges on the bench, earnest writers in the public journals as well as by the records of the criminal courts. (29) But here, in Bengal, the practice had assumed alarming proportions in the late 18th century because of the system of Kulin polygamy, which was a recognised institution in Bengalee society of those days. Ward

(25) Parliamentary Papers—House of Commons, 1824. Vol. XXIII. Extract Proceedings of the Nizamat Adalat, 23rd January, 1794. Pages 131-133.

(26) Hunter—*Annals of Rural Bengal* (London, 1868). Page 128.

(27) Westland—*Report on the District of Jessore* (Cal., 1871). Page 281.

(28) Hunter—*vide ante*. Page 128.

(29) Kaye—*vide ante*. Page 545.

tells us much of this nauseating practice in his 'View of the History, Literature and Religion of the Hindus' and no more need be said of it here. (30)

It is not possible for us at this distance of time to form even an approximate estimate of the total number of children sacrificed in different parts of Bengal every year. Ward puts the number at 500, but this includes the figure for the immolated daughters of the Rajputs of Northern and Central India. (31) Mr. O'Malley, the compiler of the 24 Parganas District Gazetteer, estimated that in 1801, 23 persons were exposed or drowned at Gangasagar in course of only one month. (32) But Mr. C. Starling, who personally visited the place on the full moon day of the month of November, in 1801, saw only eleven human beings destroyed by the sharks and not all of them were children. As regards the number of children destroyed in other places of Bengal no exact figure has been given by any of our contemporary authorities. On the whole, it may be presumed that the number was not very large if we exclude the illegitimate children of unmarried mothers and married Kulin girls, destroyed every year.

It was the Christian missionaries, who, for the first time, drew the attention of the Government to the existence of this horrible crime of infanticide in Bengal. William Carey and his brethren of the Serampore mission had at first planned a preaching tour to Gangasagar, but this was apparently not very effective. On Lord Wellesley's return to Calcutta from the fourth Mysore War and Carey's own appointment to the College of Fort William, the latter felt that his time had come to prevent the great crime of infanticide. (33) Mr. Udney, a member of the Governor-General's Council and friend of the Serampore Missionaries, drew the Governor-General's attention to the existence of this evil, and Carey, who was called on for a report on the question, after consulting the pundits recommended the abolition of the practice of sacrificing children to the Ganges, which was not based on any religious imperative. (34)

It was about this time (Feb. 1802) that the Calcutta magistrates in a letter addressed to the Vice-President in Council gave an interesting account of both the manner in which the practice was observed and the belief on which it was based. The magistrates declared that since there was no reason to suppose that the practice was authorized under the Mughal Government and as it was never sanctioned by the British Government and as the parties concerned were liable to be tried and punished according to the established law it would be sufficient to issue a proclamation notifying that any persons, who might be parties to such sacrifice would be tried and punished for the offence according to the general laws and regulations of the country. In fact,

(30) Ward—View of the History, Literature and Religion of the Hindus, Vol. III. Page 82.

(31) Ward—vide ante, Vol. II. Page 127.

(32) 24 Parganahs District Gazetteer (Cal., 1914). Page 257.

(33) George Smith—The Life of William Carey. Page 280.

(34) O'Malley—History of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa under British Rule (1925). Pages 297-298.

the magistrates informed that the sacrifices, which were scheduled to be performed at Gangasagar on the full moon day of the preceding month of January had already been prevented by the police without any disturbance or opposition whatsoever. With respect to the aged and the infirm, however, the practice of self-immolation prevailed so generally and was considered by the Hindus so instrumental to their happiness in a future state of existence that the report expressed doubt whether the adoption of any rules could completely prevent it. The magistrates further recommended that the island of Sagar should be declared subject to the jurisdiction of the magistrates of the 24 Parganahs, since it would be easier to maintain communications with the island by means of the river from Calcutta than it would be from Midnapore to which district the island was at that time considered to appertain. (35) The magistrate of Midnapore in a letter to the Secretary to the Government in the Judicial Department, dated the 4th March, 1802, agreed to the proposal of separating the Sagar island from his jurisdiction. The proposal was soon given effect to, the criminal jurisdiction of the island being put under the Calcutta magistrates and the civil jurisdiction being annexed to the district of Hooghly. (36) Finally, a draft regulation on the subject was submitted by the Nizamat Adalat on the 20th May, 1802, and Lord Wellesley concurring entirely with the measure, it was enacted as Act VI of 1802. In the preamble to the regulation it was said that the practice was not countenanced by the religious orders or by the people at large, nor was it authorized at any time by the Hindu or the Muhammadan governments of India. The persons involved in the perpetration of such crimes were therefore clearly liable to punishment and the plea of custom would be inadmissible in excuse of the offence. The regulation made the committing to the water of children or minors, with or without their consent, for the purpose of sacrifice an offence equal to wilful murder and punishable as such by law, and even the aiders and abettors in such crimes were to be awarded punishment. Even if the child or minor, thus thrown into the water, was rescued from destruction or by any means escaped from it, the persons, who were active in exposing him or her to danger of life and all aiders and abettors of such act would be held guilty of a high misdemeanour and on conviction would be liable to meet punishment. The magistrates of the districts, where such custom prevailed, were asked to be vigilant and to proclaim from time to time the provisions of this regulation. The Act was to remain in force in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Benares. (37)

It is worth noting that no voice of protest was raised against these measures from any section of the Bengalee society. The custom of throwing children into the water, as the Calcutta magistrates reported, was confined to the people of the eastern districts of Bengal, and there also it was perhaps

(35) Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, 1824: Vol. XXIII. Extract Bengal Judicial Consultations, 18th February, 1802. Pages 134-135.

(36) Parliamentary Papers: vide ante: Extract Bengal Judicial Consultations, 4th March, 1802. Pages 136-137.

(37) Parliamentary Papers: vide ante: Extract Bengal Judicial Consultations, 20th August, 1802. Pages 137-138.

practised by the lower orders of society alone. That public sentiment was against the practice, even before the regulation was issued, is proved by the fact that the sacrifice at Gangasagar had been prevented by the police in January, 1802, without provoking any disturbance or opposition whatsoever. This was quite natural in view of the fact that there was no religious sanction behind the practice of infanticide as there was behind Sati or prohibition of widow marriage. That the regulation was properly enforced, at least at Gangasagar, is proved by later official communications. A party of fifty sepoy from the garrison was sent every year along with the police town sergeant to keep peace at the time of the winter festival at Gangasagar. Since Hindu guards could not be much relied upon in suppressing the age old Hindu rite, the Calcutta magistrates in a letter to the Secretary to the Government, dated 6th March, 1803, requested that the guards, particularly all the jamadars and officers, should be Muhammadan. (38). In December, 1821, the Secretary to the Committee of Management of the Sagar Island Society in a letter to the Chief Secretary to the Government requested that the practice of sending sepoy to the Sagar island for maintaining peace at the annual fair should be discontinued since the practice of immolating children had 'entirely ceased' and a regular thana on the spot had been set up by the 24 Parganas district magistrate. The Committee offered to supply their own guards in aid of the regular establishment for the prevention of the barbarous rite if it ever occurred again. The Government gracefully complied with the request. (39) That infanticide at Gangasagar was completely suppressed is also proved by the report of a missionary Mr. Williamson, who visited the place in 1825, (40) but infanticide at other places and in other forms perhaps continued for some more years without check.

AMITABHA MUKHERJEE

(38) Parliamentary Papers: vide ante: Extract Bengal Judicial Consultations, 6th January, 1803. Page 138.

(39) Parliamentary Papers: vide ante. Pages 142-143.

(40) J. Peggs—vide ante. Page 66.

Studies in Madras Records (iii)

TRADE IN THE STRAITS

THE story of the commercial rivalry between the Dutch and the English in south-east Asia is yet unwritten. Political development after European penetration in the region is known in broad outlines. But important motivations in so far as they were connected with commercial operations remain unknown. There has not as yet been a comparative study of all the relevant records of these two Companies. And the role of the elusive private trader further complicates the situation. Needless to say that of the part played by the Asians themselves almost nothing is known with any certainty. A patient process of investigation and piecing-together of stray evidences will be required before any clear picture of this aspect of historical development can be obtained.

Some flickering light is thrown upon it by a volume of records preserved at the Madras Records Office. (1) The volume has not gone unnoticed and the events that it narrates have received some attention from a scholar like Henry Dodwell. (2) But Dodwell was not asking the same questions that we are asking to-day. It will be fruitful, therefore, to fill in those aspects of the picture which the celebrated historian ignored.

The correspondence preserved in the volume deal with an attempt made by the English East India Company to establish trading factories at Achin and Kedah in and about the year 1771. Achin was a tiny state at the northern end of Sumatra and Kedah was its neighbour and counter part on the western shore of the Malaya Peninsula.

Now, trade to these places—particularly to Achin—was not a new phenomenon. The Company itself had a factory at Achin in the seventeenth century. But it had been withdrawn. The place, however, had been a flourishing commercial centre till the late thirties of the eighteenth century. Then due to a number of local disturbances, 'the English and Surat vessels' abandoned the place. The trade was reopened in the late sixties by the private traders.

The question as to who actually reopened the trade is not easy to answer. Relying exclusively upon the volume of Public Sundries, Dodwell has given the credit to Francis Jourdan of Madras. But there is some evidence in the letter books of Francis Jourdan himself to suggest that one Casamaijor of

(1) Public Sundries 21 R. O. No. 1374.

(2) Dodwell : The Nabobs of Madras, pp. 131—135.

Nagapatam was his firm rival in this trade as early as 1769. (3) Towards the end of 1769 these two competitors possibly came together. In this connection we have to note what Jourdan wrote to the E. I. Company in explaining the rise of the Achin trade: "the gentlemen for whom we (Francis Jourdan, John Sullivan and Antonio de Souza of Madras) act have been engaged in the trade to Atcheen longer than since 1770 at which time they took the whole concern from the gentlemen who had formed and till then carried it on as it stood, houses, warehouses etc. on their books; that they likewise received from them and took into their own service the agents who had managed the business from the beginning and have since continued them at Atchen" (10-2-1772). Again in a letter from Achin (9 December, 1772) Desvoeux, the Company's agent there, wrote to the effect that the representatives of the private traders had been paying subsidies to the Sultan of Achin. Now, from a perusal of Jourdan's letter-books no entries for such expenses can be found. As a matter of fact the only references he made to this port were connected with voyage directed to it. There if Desvoeux was correct, it must have been somebody else who paid the subsidies. This particular problem, therefore, cannot be regarded as solved. (4)

Be that as it may, in this paper we shall be concerned not so much with what happened to Jourdan's and the English Company's attempts at trading to these places (a brief synopsis has been given by Dodwell) as with what was actually happening in the Straits of Malacca in the way of trading activities. In other words we shall try to obtain a glimpse of the commerce of this region by basing ourselves upon the events set into motion by Francis Jourdan.

The first question we are going to ask is: What were the other Europeans doing in these parts at this time? The answer to this—as to our other queries—will be fragmentary and will exhibit a distressing tendency to leave the sphere of commerce and shade off into that of politics. "The King (of Kedda) is very anxious," wrote Mr. Light, Jourdan's agent, from Kedda "to know your resolution (about taking up the commerce monopoly of Kedda) and I am no less so not only on the account of the disgrace (which) must accrue in case they refuse but the detriment which our trade in general will suffer in case this place falls into the hands of any other. Should the Dutch have it they would possess the entire command of the whole straights for on the coast of Quedah is a river capable of receiving

(3) Cf. Studies in Madras Records (II).

The Letter Books of Francis Jourdan. If Dodwell is right then the actual reopening was done by the voyage of *The Indian Trader* in May, 1767.

(4) A further bit of relevant material can be culled from the *Cuddalore Consultations 1768* where the Cuddalore Council can be seen to be writing to Madras as follows: "We beg leave to observe . . . that the Eastern vessels from Achin and Quedah, etc., used formerly to import at this place but that of late years that trade to the amount of two and two and a half lakhs of pagodas yearly has been entirely removed to Porto Novo by which means Company's revenue has been considerably lessened here (15-2-1768)". I do not believe this evidence is favourable to the theory of reopening of trade in 1767.

their largest ships at half flood defended from all weather. . . . Had I authority to act neither Danes, Dutch, French or anyone else should drive me out" (the letter was written most probably in the latter half of the year 1771). In a letter written on November 25, 1771, he again emphasised the "opposition of the Danish and the Dutch". After the Company intervened in this trade—which event occurred early in 1772—they sent Mr. Charles Desvouex to Achin and Mr. Edward Monckton to Kedah to investigate and report upon the trading potentialities of these two places. Apropos of the query we are now concerned with Monckton who wrote "I gave him (the King of Kedda) to understand how powerful the Company was—for they look upon the Dutch as the only powerful people" (22 April 1772). This predominance of the Dutch was particularly distasteful for Monckton. He proposed energetic steps to counter it. Among other things he wanted to issue English passes to the Chinese junks which would come to trade at Kedda. This would enable them to elude the heavy Dutch tolls (four thousand dollars a junk) at Malacca. He also wanted the English Company to intervene in a succession dispute in the neighbouring state of Rheis. The Dutch had already backed a claimant. Monckton wished to support the rival and thus "to get to share a great part of the trade the Dutch enjoy in the straits". At a place nearby the Dutch had a factory to gather in a large quantity of tin. Monckton thought this trade could also be diverted to Kedda.

Monckton also wrote about the close relationship which the Danes had with the King of Kedda. "The King of Kedda and all the Malaya Kings have got guns enough to drive all the Europeans out of India if they knew how to make use of them and yet they want more. There is nothing to be dreaded from giving them more as they already have got so many. . . . If we do not supply him the Danes will always find favour here. . . . They had always supplied guns taking 2/3rd by weight in tin". The Council at Fort St. George disapproves of all the aggressive measures proposed by Monckton. They wanted to carry on only limited trading operations and this was all they were interested in. With his hands thus tied Monckton saw the King again and the concessions he had previously secured were promptly withdrawn. "They have not the least idea," wrote Monckton in deep chagrin "of any Company but the Dutch and they rule the Malayas with a rod of iron" (13 August 1772).

That is all the information that can be gathered about Europeans other than Englishmen. We shall now try to answer the question: what was the general nature of commercial activities in this region? Our first extract will be from a letter written by Desvouex from Achin. But before that we should note a rather peculiar fact Desvouex and Monckton were both sent for the same purpose to almost the same places. But while Monckton sent in glowing and optimistic reports about the trading potentialities of Kedda, Desvouex steadily poured cold water upon any idea of establishing anything but an extremely limited commercial relation with Achin. This fact is very puzzling. I believe it should be noted in this connection that Edward Monckton—as revealed by the letter books of Jourdan—was a valued partner

in Jourdan's private trade though I am unable at the present moment to state what bearing this latter fact has upon the former. In the letter books which I have read (covering the years 1767-69) there is no mention of Desvouex.

"The trade here," wrote Desvouex from Achin "is carried on mostly on credit . . . sometimes one piece of cloth, sometimes five and scarcely ever more than twenty at a time. The quantity of goods brought to this place if no European merchants were settled here would not be near so great as it now is, as the people of the eastern coast of the island of Sumatra if they are themselves obliged to go to sea with their merchandize generally prefer to this the markets of Salangore and Queddah where they get a better price. The method practiced generally is to sell on credit to different Malaya merchants opium, piece-goods etc., for which in three or four months they promise to return beetlenut, pepper etc. These merchants carry their goods in prows to Pedere, Islabow and other places but it frequently happens that they do not come back so soon as the time stipulated (15-4-1772).

Previously to this Mr. Sight had written from Kedah to Jourdan. "There is more pepper and betelnut brought to this part from the coast of Pedis and with that article and tin. . . I will engage to load any two of your vessels from this part by the first of January and I will find wax, timber and rattan as the demand may be. There is one kind of timber here proper for house building which the worms cannot touch. There is likewise blackwood and many other kinds that I cannot at present describe" (25 Nov. 1771).

Monckton was, as we have stated, enthusiastic. "I really imagine," he wrote on 22 April 1772 "a very great trade may be carried on here when things are settled", His idea of 'settling things' was to entice as many of the commercial prows as possible to Kedah. For this he was prepared to adopt measures not always above reproach. It should be noted that this sudden congregation of prows at a particular port thus boosting its prosperity was nothing unusual in this region. And attempts at an artificial diversion were not infrequent. Thus on 17 June 1772 De Souza of Jourdan's Agency wrote to the council at Fort St. George. "I think with little trouble the Prows from the east coast of Sumatra may be prevented going to Queddah and Salangore with pepper and betelnut and gold dust of which they carry large quantities," and Mr. De Souza gave it as his opinion that this trade could be diverted to Achin.

When Monckton failed at Kedah he tried the neighbouring state of Rheio and wrote, "Rheio does not produce a single article excepting Sago. Their imports now yearly only in spice and tin is upwards of three lakhs of pagodas. Their trade is now double what it was three years ago, which shows how easily trade may be driven from one place to another so that in case the Honourable Company hereafter should think of forming a settlement here they may soon have one in a very flourishing condition (12 Oct. 1772).

With that we shall move on to our next query. What were the Asians doing? In answering this we divide the 'Asians' into three groups: the

common people at any particular place: the nobles of the place and the traders. We can state it with confidence that the reaction of the commoners and the nobility to the penetration of the English Company was one of hostility. It is difficult to say why the commonalty were hostile. But that they were there is no doubt about. Mr. Light writing from Kedah to the Agency laid it down that "nothing but force" would do in dealing with the Malayas. "When they are afraid", wrote Mr. Light "they are true". When they were not afraid they could be menacing. Thus Mr. Harrop, the permanent agent of the Agency at Achin, went in fear of personal assault. "The Atcheeners are sensible", ran Mr. Light's letter "that this whole trade depends upon the coast vessels and if Harrop is once empowered with any authority from the Nabab they will not dare to attempt anything against his person". Again, when Monckton saw the king of Kedah for the first time and gave him spacious assurances of assistance against the Dutch, against the neighbouring Salangorians and against everybody else that he could think of the king promised him among other things a sizeable piece of land—which had to be acquired only gradually. This not because the king was uncertain of his own title to it but because the inhabitants would certainly flee if the English put in a precipitate appearance. I am not very sure whether all the European Companies got the same treatment from the locals. In describing the target of popular discontent Mr. Light always used the words "your interests" when writing to the Agency. In these records there is no mention of any clash between other Europeans and the commoners.

While the reason for the hostility of the ordinary inhabitants against the English is uncertain there is nothing obscure about the motive behind the unfriendliness of the nobles. Wherever the Company wanted a foothold they sought from the local court a grant of the customs of the port. Now, this was always the only stable source of income for the local nobility. Naturally they would have nothing to do with the English. This was the main reason behind Monckton's failures at Kedah, at Rheio and later at Trangana. Sharply in contrast with this attitude to the Company the local courts were always friendly to individual European merchants. After the failure of his official mission Monckton was invited by the king of Kedah to settle down as a private trader. Light actually accepted such an invitation.

The Asian merchants themselves were not always friendly. We are leaving out of consideration those poor people who plied a prow or two taking off ten or twenty pieces of cloth on credit and being fully extended in returning the money in time. But the local king was always the most substantial merchant. And he never allowed the Company the right of free trade. Thus in the most favourable agreement which Monckton was at first able to procure from the king of Kedah, the Company agreed to sell as much opium as the king would choose to buy at three hundred and fifty Spanish dollars a chest and was then free to dispose of the other chests to merchants at a price not exceeding four hundred Spanish dollars per chest. In between the king on the one hand and the indigent retailers on the other stood a powerful group of merchants always referred to by the English

as the Gholiars. They went everywhere and knew every trick of trade. So they sold things very cheap and were quick to pick out the English as the object of an inveterate hatred. When Monckton placed orders for piece-goods on Madras (letter dated 2.5.1772) he wrote: "the Gholiars provide their goods at least 20 p.c. cheaper than any that has been sent to Mr. Light by the Association and they would never have been able to have sold a piece of their cloth had any of the Gholiars been here". But of course the Gholiars were not always absent "I have kept my ground," wrote Mr. Light to Jourdan on 25 Nov 1771 "notwithstanding the opposition of the Gholiars, Danish and Dutch. The former seems resolved if possible to exclude the English from any connection in places to which they trade. . . . They are well acquainted with the profits of this place (Kedah) and the advantage it would be of to you in particular to have it joined to the Atcheen settlement."

The Chinese appear to have been the only people not unfriendly to the English. And they were not unimportant either. "The Chinese," wrote Monckton (20 Oct '72) are the life of trade. They swarm in the straits like bees. A great number of them has offered to go in case the English would form a settlement in these parts." It is a pity that nothing further can be found on this topic.

There remains one further question for us to consider. And that is: what precisely did the English want? It is fairly certain that all that the Association wanted was trade with these islands for whatever it was worth. But soon other considerations crept in. "I remember", wrote Mr. Light to De Souza "it was once your opinion that a house upon Polo Penang (at Kedah) would be very useful; it would be extremely so because the Europe ships can easily stop there, there is plenty of wood, water and provision. Then they may be supplied with tin, pepper, betelnut, rattans (and) bird's nests and the Macao ships will be glad to stop then and all other vessels passing through the straits may be easily supplied as at Malacca. Whether this would not suit the Company better than Our Association unless they will act with more spirit I leave you to judge". When the Company intervened all that they wanted was to supply their China-market. From Madras they sent on average two hundred chests of opium (four hundred and fifty rupees each) a year and a quantity of white and blue long cloth. Apart from this goods went to these islands from Bengal and Surat. About these the Madras council had no statistical information. Monckton who emphasised the value of opium as an export to these islands wrote: "It should be made known to the merchants of Bengal and Madras that they are prohibited importing opium on this coast." And in exchange of the opium and cloth the Company wanted "tin, wax, pepper and elephants' teeth and other articles for the China market."

Though the Company intervened in the trade it had no intention of embarrassing the Association unduly. In the letter of instructions sent out to Desvouex the Madras Council wrote: "It is not the Company's desire neither is it our intention to distress the concerned. We wish on the

contrary to show them every indulgence we can consistently with our duty to the Company." And when in face of the unfriendliness of local courts the Company withdrew, the concerned was, presumably, left in sole charge of the field though of this the volume of records does not speak.

ASHIN DASGUPTA.

Some Problems of the Peasantry of Bengal before the Permanent Settlement.

THE present article is a study of only a few of so many sources of sufferings of Bengal peasantry before the Permanent Settlement. The sources discussed here are as follows: (a) Peculiar nature of the revenue paid by the ryots (b) Some illegal taxes (c) Abuse of produce rent (d) Growing differentiation of the peasantry into richer and poorer sections. Lastly we shall try to understand certain practices the peasantry had resort to to hold their own, in which certain facts of social and economic system assisted them.

Let us first try to understand the nature of the payment made by a ryot to the landholder for the use of land. The Collector of Burdwan (1) seems to be very much near the truth when he remarked—"the revenue of the country does not appear to me of the nature of land tax and as the husbandman is not the proprietor of the soil, his profit is only proportioned to his productive labour." It is perhaps wrong to lay this down as a general rule applying to entire Bengal Presidency of the time. But it can be backed up with adequate evidence if we assert that that was a widely prevalent practice and usage. The payment of revenue was not determined in most cases by the differential advantage of any superior land upon the marginal one, by any consideration of the quantity of produce and of the extent of the cultivation and other relevant facts. In Rungpore (2) the lands were not measured. One form of Pottah entitled the ryot to cultivate as much ground as he pleased. After the harvest was ready, a rough measurement fixed the volume of ryot's revenue. In this case, the ryot had to pay a great variety of aboabs and taxes. By another kind of Pottah, a ryot was permitted to cultivate as much land as he chose, subject to the payment of a fixed rent per annum, without the liability to pay any fresh taxes. In case the ryot deserted or died, his successor paid nothing more than the balance due from him, nor would he suffer the zemindar to measure the land. Upon a measurement being attempted, the ground remained unoccupied. Only the chookany Pottahs specified the boundaries of the ground as well as the amount of rent. By the Mussukussy chookany pottahs (3) the ryot was to pay a fixed annual rent whether the cultivation was complete or partial. According to the chookany Fussul pottah, the ryot had to pay in proportion to the extent of cultivation, this sort of pottah

(1) 24th June, 23, Board of Revenue, 1788.

(2) 8th May, No. 36, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(3) 7th Oct., 19-21, Board of Revenue, 1791.

was more usual for rubbee and khurruf harvest. In Futtypore Singhia Pergunnah of Purnea (4) the prevalence of gutchbundy tenure (explained later on) made the payment of revenue quite indeterminate. The whole of each gutch was farmed at a specific Summa without a reference to the quantity of land contained in it. This was explainable by the fact that the pergunnah was waste, bordering on the Morung and subject to the depredations of Gorkhalis and consequent desertion of ryots. The gutches were common where the cultivation was least considerable. In Havilley Purnea (5) the Kausht (unlimited) leases at low rates subject to a measurement subsequent to cultivation covered so vast an area as 30152 Begah—11 Cottah ; under the working of the Moshakhsee leases specifying the Summa and quantity of land without any limitation of term, there were 21220 Begah—3 Cottah. The extent of land under leases at low rates subject to a measurement after cultivation but containing the proviso that the ryots' jumma should be kept up was 1979 Begah—6 Cottah. The Khaust leases were of recent origin. Of 174 pottahs of this nature, only one was prior to 1178. In this case also the main reason for the uncertain character of revenue was the declining production of land due to the desertion of ryots. In Bauldacaal, we come across a peculiar determinant of revenue payable by the ryot. The Beetee land or that which surrounded the dwelling of a ryot was generally more valuable than the land for common cultivation, since in the Beetee land the ryot cultivated every vegetable necessary for his support. But this land was assessed by what was called a Soorut Jumma—the circumstances of the occupier and not the extent of the ground determined the amount of revenue payable. A ryot in indigent condition occupied as much land as was necessary. But the zemindar reserved to himself by the custom of the country, the right of settling at any time any other ryot upon the ground, the former ryot being left only with so much land as was adequate for his subsistence. In the general Pottahs, the quantity of land was not inserted. The Pottah was roughly a declaration of the current rate of assessment per canny. The mode of assessment was peculiar. Two oxen or $\frac{1}{2}$ of a plough was called a raik. Every man in a family was likewise called a raik. A ryot having four brothers and six ploughs was set down at 17 raiks. A ryot with only two oxen and with none but himself as the only grown up person was stated at 2 raiks. The number of raiks was the criterion by which to judge the circumstances of the ryot and to determine his proportion of the taxes and charges. The trade and profession of the ryot was taken count of, especially in the case of those ryots who did not depend solely upon agriculture for subsistence. Moreover, it often happened that a ryot deeply in debt despite his fairly big family and several ploughs was not assessed to his normal proportion determined by the number of raiks. The difference was thrown upon those whose circumstances admitted of payment of more revenue. In Tirhoot (6) the Teeka pottahs were determined by a differentiation of the qualities of soil. But these pottahs applied only to the highest and best lands

(4) 22nd Oct, 51, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(5) 7th May, No. 35, Board of Revenue, 1789.

(6) 22nd June, 77, Board of Revenue, 1787.

around a village, which were only 1/10th in proportion to the second rate land. The zemindar under these pottahs collected the revenue, be the land cultivated or not. This applied especially to land called Kaumil expressly reserved for the culture of wheat, tobacco and opium. The richness of the soil did not permit of the land lying fallow even for a year. Consequently the ryots could not safely neglect the cultivation ; on the expiration of the 1st year, in case the land lay fallow, the land reverted to the ancient assessment. The Kheel Pottah was granted for cultivation of the waste. It was distinct in its operation when it related to Bhaulee lands : if called a Teekooree Pottah, the government share was 1/3 and the ryot's 2/3 ; under the Punchdoo Pottah, the government share was 2/5 and the ryot's 3/5. Even here if the lands were of a better sort a fixed assessment of money was charged, the rate varying according to quality of land. After the third year, the assessment was fixed. The Hoond Pottahs were no pottahs for a definite sort of revenue. The Pottah was granted usually on lands on which a village had been raised—the lands long before lying waste. The good, bad and middling were lumped together, without any particular measurement to count the exact quantity of begahs, the whole was formed on an ideal computation at such a certain sum of money subject to no deductions or additional charges whatever. Mocurrery Pottah was merely a stipulation for a certain quit rent. It was granted for services either to a person or to the State. It partook of the nature of Jageers and it was not resumable during the life-time of the incumbent. In Nuddea (7). There was no measurement for long 36 years before 1790. It was customary to collect the revenues from the ryots agreeable to the amount paid in the last and preceding year. In some khas mehals of Dacca (8) it was not a custom to grant pottahs to the ryots, nor did the rights entered into any specific engagements. The lands were measured at the close of the year, upon any excess of cultivation being proved, such excess was assessed. In Bishenpore (9) the rents of the ryots were not regulated by the number of begahs each held in cultivation. They were assessed in proportion to the jumma of the village which was in its turn determined by the competition which arose at the time of annual farming of the Hoodahs. In Boglepur (10) excepting some teeka pottahs specifying the quantity of land, most of the pottahs left it to the discretion of the ryot to cultivate as much land as he chose or was able to manage. When the crop was ripe, a measurement fixed the amount of rate to be paid. In Bhowley Pottas, however, names of the harvest, every species of grain cultivated and the proportion to be paid by the ryot were clearly stated. In Burdwan (11) not more than 1/4th of the ryots were in possession of any pottah. It is worth noting that the few pottahs that the ryots held were not granted by the zemindar, but by the farmers and gomasthas in most cases. Established custom and former usage

(7) 10th Feb., No. 49, Governor-General-in-Council (Revenue Dept.) progs., 1790.

(8) 13th Jan., 19, G.G.C. (Revenue Dept.) progs., 1790.

(9) Letter from Hesilrige to the Collector of Beerbhoom, 6th Nov. 1789. Burdwan District Records (New series).

(10) 1st Feb., No. 12, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(11) 24th June, 23, B. of Rev., 1788.

were the guide to the rate of assessment. A ryot holding more land than was stipulated for in the pottah did not renew the pottah accordingly. Adjustment of revenue took place afterwards. Further assessment on the increased productivity of land was determined by the volume of rent paid by other ryots in a like situation. This nature of rent was further illustrated by the difference between the rent paid by the Khoodkhost ryots and that by the Pykaust ryots the former "being ryots of inferior caste" had to pay a house rent, and relatively a bigger amount of revenue than the latter. The Pykaust ryots did not pay rent for the dwelling houses. Nichgong Pykaust who cultivated the lands of their own village and Baziegong Pykaust paid still lower rate of revenue. Muttarife ryots generally not cultivating lands but carrying on a profession paid house rent to all the above ryots. The difference between the Pykaust and Khoodkhost ryots in the payment of revenue arose not from any consideration of the quality of soil, but from the scarcity of labour requisite for full cultivation of land. The zemindar had to be soft towards the Pykaust ryots to bring into cultivation lands heretofore lying waste.

The main factors explaining this nature rent are possibly the existence of so much waste land and consequent absence of any competition between the ryots to grab any plot of land. Holding of land was not yet a legal fixity; hence the return for the use of land was nothing definite. Caste privileges, general human considerations, consequences of weak-kneed zemindary bureaucracy etc.—all coloured the nature of rent. ✓

Originally this system was perhaps a point of advantage to the ryots. But certain forces growing in two or three decades before the Permanent Settlement, especially after the Company's accession to Dewany made the system tyrannical for the ryots. And the evils once originated had the peculiar tendency of perpetuating themselves. In most cases measurement dropped almost completely out of the scene. In Bauldcaul and certain districts of Purnea, collective agreement for the payment of revenue concluded with the principal ryots or farmers of villages was an unhappy substitute for the measurement, however roughly it might have been done. Even where the system of measurement lingered on, it was in some cases arbitrary and partial. In Bauldcaul (12) a peculiar mode of measurement known as Pural was obtaining. The Pural Munshiff did not measure the whole village but only select parcels of land. In proportion to the concealments coming to light in those parcels of land, the whole village was charged with what was called a duk. For instance, if 1/16th of land more than what was stated by the ryots was discovered, every individual ryot whether he had any secreted land or not, was charged in the proportion of duk of 1/16th. We have seen that distribution of the burden of payment was in some cases regulated by the circumstances of the ryot. But that could prove irritating to the ryots. In 24 Pergs (13) a system of like nature in vogue was called Haar Commee. It was a deduction of rent allowed to some indigent ryots, the deduction being made up by increased assessment on the remaining ryots on the same

(12) 4th June, 27, Board of Revenue, 1789.

(13) 8th May, 54, Board of Revenue, 1787.

village and same species of land. The latter was called Haar beshee. It often happened that some ryots by collusion secured Haar Commee which affected the purpose of their brethren. The principal ryots in league with the village aumeen made it a common practice.

Specially, the farming system hard hit the ryots in many ways. Generally there was no respect for proper kist bundy under the farming system. Paterson (14) attributed the depopulation of Bauldacaal and Ganga mandal mainly to the relentless exactions of the farmers from the ryots in the last three months of Bengal year which were the seasons of cultivation. The farmer whose term of lease ran out in choit had no interest to make advances or to take the least trouble to encourage cultivation. It was his interest to make the most of the remaining days of his lease. Moreover, there were two or three aumils, as in Tirhoot, (15) for the same place in the course of one year. Each aumil contested the pottah granted by his predecessor. If the ryot promoted by his own labour his cultivation, the aumil claimed a share with the plea that the former pottah was not his granting. In possible cases of ryots' loss, the aumil forced him to adhere to the former pottah adding that it was after minute study of the engagements entered into by his predecessor that he was induced to engage. It impeded any progress in cultivation. Farming system had another scope for oppression on the ryots. (16) The new aumil seldom got possession till 3 or 4 months of the year expired. By this time the former aumil granted pottas. The present aumil then refused or confirmed the Pottahs at his own sweet will. The institution of Malzemin (17) closely associated with the farming system proved a fresh source of oppression to the ryots. The malzemin with his invisible power of credit could defy the zemindar and imposed further levies on the country. In Belluah and Bakergung the system of malzemind bred its worst evils. In Dinajpur (18), the farmers exploited the ryots in another way. The ryot as a result of exactions had to quit his land annually and held off from cultivation till the Kutkenadar or farmer induced him to cultivate by a lower rate. But at the approach of the harvest, the crop was attached. The property thus secured, the Kutkenadar forced the ryots to consent to the terms he originally held his land upon. But the rent specified in the Collusive Pottah is the standard for the Cheet Furruk or general release granted to the ryot at the expiration of the year. Under the farming system attachment of crops to extort payment from the ryots was frequently resorted to, specially in Sylhet (19), Rajshah (20) Seroopoor (21) and some other districts. In Mundulghat (22) (in Burdwan) another oppressive

(14) 4th June, 27, Board of Revenue, 1789.

(15) 19th Aug., No. 68, Board of Revenue, 1788.

(16) 22nd June, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(17) 1st May, 25AB, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(18) 9th March, 1787. Dinajpore Dist. Records, Vol. 2.

(19) 10th Feb., G.G.C. (Rev. Dept.) Progs. 1796.

(20) 20th June, 18-20, 1792. Board of Revenue.

(21) 6th July, 7, Board of Revenue, 1792.

(22) 22nd March, No. 14, Board of Revenue, 1796.

system known as Nelaum Beshee worked. The ryot generally commenced his cultivation about the beginning of Chyete and made quite a headway in cultivation by Assar. Until that period the Kutkenadar was at liberty to accept offers of an increase for the land thus cultivated. The ryot agreeing to pay the highest excess offered was continued in possession; if not was thrown out of it. The season for cultivation being nearly over, the ryot had to submit to the arbitrary excess, otherwise he had to go destitute of any sort of means for his subsistence. Of many other evils the ryots had to labour under, we name only a few: Some evils arise from the varieties of agency for the system of collection. The Zemindarry Bundobust of Dinajpore (23) was formed under 3 distinct heads. Khas Mehals, Pergunnatee Musteazzery and Huzzory Izaradars all these worked intricately. In Bishepore (24) the ryots extremely suffered from this evil since in the small divisions of the ryots, lands pertaining to Bheterjaut Mehal, Buxy dufter, Bazee zemin dafter, and Jageer and charity lands were lumped together. The ryots were harassed by the peons of these different mehals. In Midnapore the problem took a slightly different form. (25) The Sudder Canongoe considerably powerful by virtue of his office and extensive rent free land could place 9 to 10 gomasthas in each pergunnah who often abused the power given them. Some other evils arose from the judicial power of the zemindars. The ryots could not appeal from the decision of the zemindar.

Now we shall see how the indefinite nature of the ryots payment was a scope for limitless exactions from the ryots. (26) A study of the illegal taxes will give us an idea of the extent to which the tyranny of the zemindars could go. Some of the taxes directly hit production. In Beerbhoom a tax was imposed upon digging of tanks. In an upland district like Beerbhoom tanks were a basic need for the irrigation of land. Specially in times of drought the tanks were used to moisten the land. A tax called Kummar Mangun (upon ploughs) of 20 seers of paddy each per annum was exacted from the ryots. (27) Since at the time the zemindars claimed lordship over the waste and pasture ground, a tax on pasturage was a common phenomenon throughout Bengal. (28) In Beerbhoom (29) the ryots were charged with a tax on waste lands forced upon them. Forced imposition of land on the ryot over and above his original quantity and beyond his means or ability to cultivate was simply outrageous. Abad-beshee was of the same nature—for newly settled or cultivated land an extra charge was made. The ryots had to bear a great portion of burden for supporting the zemindary bureaucracy. In Bauldacaal (30) this kind of tax was seen in its crudest.

(23) 17th March, 1787. Dinajpore Dist. Records, Vol. 2.

(24) 18th Oct., 1789. Burdwan Dist. Records (New Series).

(25) 22nd June, No. 78, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(26) My study of the taxes here is very limited in scope. In a later article I intend to deal at length with this aspect of life of the peasantry.

(27) 25th March, No. 47, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(28) 13th Nov., 15, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(29) July 31st, 26, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(30) 8th Feb. (Appendix), Board of Revenue, 1788.

Taxes were exacted to obtain investiture of zemindarry; on the pretext of acknowledgment of the zemindar, fresh demands were made; (31) private debt of the zemindar was paid off by exactions from the ryots. In 1187 and 1188, the farmer Doolub Ram continued the practice of the zemindar by imposing Sood Kissarant to make good the interest of money borrowed to discharge the revenue. Exactions from the ryots supported the expensive judicial establishment. Burden of increase of tax was passed over to the ryots. In Belluah (1st May, 25A B. of Revenue, 1787) the pernicious practice of keeping up a force, which helped the zemindars to seize upon the different islands formed, financed mainly by the ryots was in vogue. In most of the districts, heavy expenditure of the zemindar on certain specific occasions—marriage, (33) birth of a child, death, funeral ceremony of zemindar's parents, and any unforeseen calamity (34) was borne out of ryots' contribution willing or forced. In Jessore, these taxes were known as Beshee. These taxes were enphemistically called "mangun" in some districts, i.e., benevolence on a pretence that the zemindar was hard put to it to pay up his rent. Some other taxes are quite revealing as they show how even the personal details of the ryots were not left unaffected by zemindar's tyranny. Celebration of all religious festivals was subject to a taxation in Bauldacaal and Midnapur. Persons dying without heirs, had to pay taxes; taxes were levied for burying the dead, for performing absolution act of cows dying by accidents. In Bishenpore (35) the person restoring a lower class of Hindoos to their caste received a salamy from them at the time of their marriages—the rate varying from 8 as. to Rs. 3. Neemy Singh, the holder of the Kulletah mehal (of which this tax was an article) placed his own gomasthas over different parts of the district. If the charge against a person accused of crime stood, he was restored to caste upon payment of 3 Rs. 8 as. Even if the charge was false, he had to pay 1 Re. to secure release. The gomasthas interpreted any crime as suited their interest and some times concocted a crime only to fatten their pocket. In Midnapore (36) Bhaydaun (separation of brothers), Chinellan (Fornication) and other trespasses—all these cases required the parties concerned to take licences from the zemindar through their respective paramaniks or heads of castes. Very naturally, the parties had to feed fat the avidity of the paramaniks and zemindar; otherwise they had to become outcastes. The practices known as ant-cooran or Bilet Mehal and Nauwaddy were simply oppressive. In a family where the husband died and no male child was left or where the husband being dead, the son and only male left should die, the zemindar seized upon all movable or immovable property, The widow, female children or other relations were left out. In 24 Per-

(31) In Tirhoot this was called Dustoor and Russoom Chowdryat (22nd June, 77, Board of Revenue, 1787).

(32) 8th May, 34, 1787, Board of Revenue.

(33) In Tirhoot, it was called Baira Shadeat.

(34) In Tirhoot called Bairee ghummee.

(35) Letter from Hesilrige to Collector of Beerbhoom, July 29, 1789. Burdwan Dist. Records.

(36) 22nd June, 78, Board of Revenue, 1787.

BENGAL BEFORE THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT.

gunnahs (37) a tax was known as Dhenky Salamy—a tax on each Dhen to the amount of one rupee. This must have hurt most of the ryots, since each ryot had to use a Dhenkee to pound rice and paddy. Taxes of nature were without number.

Abuse of produce rent was another source of oppression to the ryots. There were various sorts of produce rent. In some cases, the ryots were to pay the agreed proportion, the conditions of net produce and of season being taken into consideration. The Sajah land of Bishenpore was of this nature. (38) More widely prevalent was the practice to divide the actual produce. Different methods were adopted to effect this division—namely Coot and Caat Commar of Bishenpore, (39) Keyt Batee, Zung Batee, Aghoon Batee of Tirhoot. (40) The Coot is an estimate of the quantity of grain made by five or more principal men of the village who with the gomastha and ryot visited the field. The half of whatever they estimated the field would produce must be paid by the ryot, be he loser or gainer by it. The Kaat was a bit different. When the harvest was got in and the grain was trodden out by the gomastha and the ryot made a division of it, the former taking from each heap as much as he could draw at once with both hands “as to the further advantage of government” and somewhat less quantity for himself. Keyt Batee was the simple division of the produce according to the current usage when the parties concerned did not object to the ameen’s report. When the report was contested, Zung Batee was the method followed. In that case, a certain quantity was picked up from a given corner of the field, cut and weighed. If the quantity tallied with that of ameen’s report, the ryot’s plea was summarily set aside. By the Aghoon Batee, the division was made when the different produce of the field was cut, heaped together and then sifted. Produce rent of a different sort was seen in Burdwan. (41) The Conjowra lands of Burdwan had no settled ryots. It was a cultivation by contract, the terms varying in different parts of the district. In general the farmer engaged with ryots of adjacent villages for cultivation. The ryot in some cases retained the whole produce and paid a certain amount in money calculated upon the price which the article of production fetched in the market.

The seemingly innocuous system of produce rent could turn into an instrument of oppression upon the ryots. Payment of a fixed proportion, whether the season favourable or not, was simply iniquitous. The static technique of production and recurring natural disasters tended not infrequently to tilt the scale against the ryots. The methods followed in the division of the produce was quite arbitrary; the landholder could easily prevail upon the ameen or principal men of the village who stated the quantity of the produce to declare themselves in favour of him. Then a slight change in the ratio of shares was to spell ruin on the ryots. Mr. Seton, assistant to Collector Behar ascribed the ruined state of Arwul Mussowra, a pergunnah of Behar

(37) 8th May, 54, 1787, Board of Revenue.

(38) 29th March, 67, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(39) 29th March, 67, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(40) 22nd June, No. 77, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(41) 24th June, No. 23, Board of Revenue, 1788.

district to this cause.(42) Mr. Seton had to reduce the share of the landlord to normal half of the produce which was in fact abolishing an aboab of 14 seers per maund—the sole difference in the pergunnah between the share of the proprietor and ryot. This difference “was trifling indeed if correctly estimated in the appraisement of crop but which by deviation from the broad line of half and half had introduced vexation.” More disastrous for the ryots was the arbitrary conversion of produce rent into money rent as often as the proprietor willed it. The farming system with its compelling urgency to extort as much from the ryots as was possible before the year of lease ran out rendered practically nugatory any adherence to current norm. In 1781 when Devy Singh (43) was farmer of Rungpore, the grain was uncommonly cheap and the farmer threw to four winds the agreement made with the ryot for addie rent and extorted money rent. The Resident of Malda wrote to the Collector of Dinajpore (44) that the weaver of Mahypore in Pergunnah Santosh cultivated lands for 7 or 8 years last according to Chanonah Pottahs stipulating a part payment in kind. But at that time the ameens sent to it demanded a fixed rate in money of 12 as. per begah. In Tirhoot (45) it was usual for the aumils or farmers to opt for either produce rent or money rent, since there was no fixed rule in money or grain according to the price current established. It was the custom for the nerick of Bhadaon and aughun harvest to be only adjusted in Maug and the Rubby harvest in Assar. This held out ample opportunities to the renters to profit by the increasing price of grain as the season advanced. The renters fixed the rate according to the inflated price. In the Comar lands of Burdwan (46) (specially applying to the Mundleghaut), this assumed an uglier form. It was the custom of the pergunnah for the ryot to receive his share in the proportion of 9 in 20. The Kutkenadar usually overrated the produce. In addition to this imposition, as the ryot was obliged to pay in ready money such portion of the crops as belonged to the Kutkenadar, the arbitrary valuations of crops meant a fresh oppression. For example if a ryot had to pay for 100 mds. of rice and normal price fetched Rs. 100, the Kutkenadars pushed up the value of the rice by forcing the ryot to pay them at the rate of Re. 1 for 32 seers. By this means the ryot sustained a loss of 8 seers in every maund and was compelled to pay 125 Rs. for rice which he could sell for Rs. 100. Thus the ryots were forced to purchase the share of the Kutkenadars at an overrated valuation. In some specific cases, especially after natural calamities, the ryots' share of the produce was already thinned out.(47) Generally the ryots in these cases had to count on the favour of the zemindar for essential factors of production and for the immediate maintenance of the ryot and his family. The share of the ryot was thus already anticipated and at the time of harvesting, a paltry quantity of grain fell to his lot. The

(42) 1st Feb., No. 32, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(43) 9th March, 1787. Dinajpur Dist Records, Vol. I.

(44) 21st Feb., 1787. Ibid.

(45) 22nd June, No. 77, 1787 Board of Revenue.

(46) 6th July, 7, Board of Revenue, 1792.

(47) 25th Nov., No. 26, 1791; 30th Dec., No. 13, 1791, Board of Revenue.

zemindar could thus become possessed of the entire amount of grain and he could demand any price from the ryots. From the scarcity and dearness of grain, the zemindar could reap higher profits.

It is very easy to see how the sudden conversion of produce rent into money rent in the above cases ruined the peasantry. The ryots were forced to part with much of their produce at a low price to pay money rent of a specific amount. In small peasant economy with the very modest needs of the peasants, the role of money was the least considerable. There was a real scarcity of specie. So the 'distress of the peasants suddenly called upon to pay in specie is not hard to imagine. In Tirhoot where the adjustment took place much after the actual time of harvest, the ryot's produce was already very much thinned by personal consumption and sale of the surplus just after the harvests. When the demand for money rent came upon the ryot at an inflated price, the ryot's store almost ran out. The ryot was compelled to part with the remaining produce possibly meant for seed in the coming harvest. The brutal practice in Mundleghut needs no more clarification.

Another important factor which had much to do with the worsening of the lot of the actual cultivators of the soil was a growing differentiation of the peasantry into richer and poorer peasants. In two ways, it affected the interest of the ryots. Firstly, the richer and privileged section of the peasantry distributed the burden of any fresh extortion upon the poorer peasants alone. Goodlad (48) while examining the causes of the disputes between the zemindar of Baharbund and the ryots of that pergunnah found that it was the principal ryots who resisted any plan of measurement, since they held more land than they paid rent for, that the poorer ryots relished the idea of measurement. To make up for the deficiency due to the frauds of the principal ryots, the poorer ryots had to bear the main burden of arbitrary taxes. The measurement the poorer ryots thought, would tend to equalise the burden of rent. In Dinajpur (49) several imposts were introduced by the Kutkenadars or under farmers who were mostly the principal ryots of the village. In Bishenpore, (50) the farmers for the most part were mundoles of villages. By agreement amongst themselves, no competition arose among them when the farms were annually put to auction unless an indigent intruder or a dependant of the zemindar tried his luck. The plea of losses and heavy assessment had to be admitted, for no better terms could be obtained than the mundole proposed. The Collector of Beerbhoom (51) reported that in 1788 the unauthorised exactions in Bishenpore upon the ryots amounted to Rs. 37,587-12-9, of which some were refunded to the ryots.

(48) Letter to Board of Revenue, 12th April, 1787. Rungpore District Records, Vol. 5.

(49) Letter to Board of Revenue, 12th August, 1789. Dinajpur District Records, Vol. 1.

(50) Hcsilrege to Collector of Beerbhoom—5th Aug., 1788. Burdwan District Records (New Series).

(51) 13th Aug., 1789. Board of Revenue.

And a large amount was laid to the charge of the mundles. In Gondiwara (52)^a a pergunnah of Purnea, a new Ryabundee (table of rates) was framed in 1164. The existing rates were the grounds of that table, in which all imposts additional to the Assul were consolidated and the rates stood at one specific sum for each distinction of the produce. The low rates to the Brahmins and Rajepoots, the privileged section of the peasantry were discontinued and all were evenly assessed according to the table. But these castes very numerous in the pergunnah and cultivating a considerable proportion of the lands sent up a howl and resisted the adoption of the table. The plan had to be dropped and these castes got back the privileges again. But the general rates were annually raised. Reports (53) of the Collectors of Nadia, Rungpore etc. strongly pleaded for equalisation of rent between the richer and poorer ryots. Another specific illustration of the point was the assessment of Sireepore (a pergunnah of Purnea) in 1187. The jumma was settled at 86,000 by a Lokabahar engagement of the ryots, on the condition of general measurement to assess the jumma. In executing this, the principal ryots overrated the inferior classes of ryots and kept secret the most valuable part of their own cultivation. A deficiency in the jumma-bund was natural and it was made good by a general gundah of 4½ as. The continuance of the gundah coupled with the overrating by the severe measurement compelled the ryots to desert in big numbers. The jumma fell in 1189 to 56,000 Rs. In Seroopoor (54) formerly measurement was the guide to assessment. But in the seventies and eighties of the 18th century little attention was paid to the quantity of land in cultivation and scarcely any to the produce. The settlement was made for the entire village collectively. The Tahood for the jumma was signed by a few of the principal ryots or concluded with separate ryots, called Huzzoree Jotdars or with farmers of the villages termed zimmehdars. In the first case the head ryots distributed greater burden on the poorer ryots. The village aumeens who were to see to the distribution of rent were no check.

More important in this connection was the growth of under tenantry. Several causes can be assigned to this.(55) The growth of under-tenantry could in very few cases be ascribed to leases by which the principal ryots held the entire quantity of land when population was very thin. The Gutchbundy tenure of Soorjapore in Purnea under which under-tenantry thrived much had perhaps something to do with scarce population and very

(52) 20th Oct., No. 40, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(53) 10th Feb., G.G.C. (Revenue Dept.) progs.

(54) 22nd March, No. 14, 1790, Board of Revenue. Harrington's report on Seroopoor.

(55) Most important sources on the problem of under-tenantry are the following :

(a) Some reports of Colebrooke on principles of assessment in Purnea, 18th June, No. 8, 13, 18, Board of Revenue, 1790. (b) Letter from the Collector of Purnea to the Board of Revenue, 19th Aug., 75, G.G.C. (Revenue Dept.) Progs., 1790. (c) Letter from the Collector of Calcutta to the Board of Revenue, 23rd April, No. 19, 1792. (d) Petition of Md. Zemaun Khan, 25th July, No. 12, Board of Revenue, 1791. (e) Letter from Collector of Beerbhoom to Board of Revenue, 13th Aug., Board of Revenue, 1789,

BENGAL BEFORE THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT.

low extent of cultivation: As to origin of the Gutchdarry tenure, tradition attributed the tenure to the mode in which the country was nistered when held by the mountaineers. At the time of scarce po each cultivator was at liberty to undertake the cultivation of as mu as he could hold sway over. The track of land which he took, asc and limited by habitual possession was denominated his gutch, fo the gutchdar paid rent not by the measure of land or produce but b on every plough employed by him. The Gutches were widely prevaler cultivation was least considerable. It was so very natural that the G would be employing more hands to bring as much land into cultiva was possible.

More important factor to contribute to the growth of under-tenar the exploitation of richer peasantry upon the poorer one. The rich p sought to make a capital of the distress of the common ryots and th peasantry appropriated a big share of surplus value created by the of the common ryots. The Collector of Purnea reported that pergunnah Dhurrumpore, the richer peasantry entitled generally to r than half the produce possessed full 6/7. He explained it in this w ryot cultivating 90 begahs would hold it on the following rates and prop

12 begahs Bhowlee 4 Rs. per begah.

28 „ Poordhera (full rate) 1 Re. 8 as. per begah.

50 „ Cumdhera (low rate) 6 as. per begah.

The Bhowlee and Poordhera he cultivated himself. 50 begahs are c by the Colait ryots. Evidently every begah produces about the Cumdhera pottahs being in several cases ill-gotten. Assuming the the government to be 4 Rs., the product would be 8 Rs. per b 720 Rs. for which he paid the government 118-12 retaining to hi inclusive the share of the under-tenants. It is very easy to underst the principal ryot could not reap such a high profit if Colait ryots v employed. Another widely adopted practice was that the ryot i cultivation more land than they could individually cultivate. They the poorer ryots to desert. Since the cultivation declined, it was not for them to get sanctioned a reduced rate. Then the ryots emple deserted ryots destitute of property and means of cultivation. New c assessed at reduced rate yielded proportionally bigger profits, the portion being appropriated by the richer ryots. So this practice mad tenantry indispensable. In another way the intrigues of head ryots conditions for under-tenantry. It was common for the ryots to conc part of the cultivation. But the threat of the renter to measure t brought the principal ryots to a compromise (Benaup) at a specific rupee in consideration of the measurement being omitted. They it by collusion with the renter; the inferior cultivators were prev ignorance and awe of the principal ryots from seeking any redres remedy left to them was the desparate one of desertion. Rarely increase of cultivation of the poorer ryots keep pace with the gradual lation of Burjurreeb and Benaup compromises. These were doubly o

could not maintain even the former cultivation. They moved on the deserted holdings of their unfortunate brethren on their own tenure. The increase in the extent of cultivation required more labour; the richer ryots called back the absconders from some other place to cultivate the lands. Moreover, instances were not rare where the poorer ryots and other misfortunes had to seek loans from the basic factors of production and most often the condition was that the formerly free ryots to the level of under-tenants.

Two main modes of under-tenantry. In Purnea, there were two modes—the Colait and Addya ryots. The former paid half of the produce. The under-tenants under the Addya mode mostly in kind. But in some cases, money rent was the main condition for this was the relinquishment of the gutchdar. The rent payable by the gutchdar to the zemindar was regulated by any fixed rate, but by the quantity of land. The mode for the zemindar was to invite rival offers and where the cultivation declined. Not infrequently the zemindar allowed the deduction demanded, required a higher rent was willing to engage for. The gutch being given up in the zemindar if unable to settle another tenant engaged with the same rates known as Beeran Durbundee. In Beerbhoom, Kaust ryots employed Kershans or daily labouring ryots in cultivation of their lands, the Kershans received 1/3 share of the produce. In Panchawongong (in Calcutta Collectorship), three modes of under-tenantry were prevalent—Jumma, Bhag, Goloo and Teeka. In the Jumma mode, the zemindar was committed to the charge of an under-tenant who paid a fixed sum to the government and retained himself the surplus produce. In the Bhag mode, the zemindar obtained in the case of heavier assessed lands—

1. The jumma mode seems to be the means of the relief from cares of relatively bigger extent of cultivation. The principal ryot could not normally partake of the surplus value of the land. The other three modes left the principal ryot to the surplus. In Bhaga and Goloo, payment was in kind. In the Bhagdar upon the miscarriage of cultivation work was provided for. In the Goloo mode, payment of the share of the principal ryot. In Teeka mode, payment in money was provided for. In all these cases, the zemindar was that the main ryot advanced money to the under-tenant in interest.

2. The relation between the principal ryot and his under-tenants was that the zemindar was for the ryot to exploit his under-tenants. No written agreement was granted to the addiadar in the exact sense of the term was granted to the addiadar a verbal agreement. The engagement was annual, Panchawongong. The Collector of Purnea reported that the zemindar was at his own sweet will the engagement with his under-tenants were not by an estimation of the crop valued at the end of the year but by actual division of the grain. Previous to the division

of the crop, certain deductions were made. The quantity of seed sown was repaid twofold to the person who loaned it. Two Cottahs (a Cottah being equal to 3 or 4 seers) per Bissee 20 Cottah (taken from the quantity remaining after the deduction for borrowed seed) were allowed to Etmamkar or person employed to watch the crops (this was not universal, but exacted only by those who holding several gutches employed persons to watch the crops thereby preventing the under-tenants from privately reaping it). Then a deduction was to be made for payment to blacksmith for work done to the plough, the rate varying in different harvests. The Kyal was to be paid $\frac{1}{2}$ Cottah per bissee for measuring off the crop. Expenses of sacrifice (Niaz and Poojah) at two Cottahs per plough constituted another article of deduction. Allowance to the conjurer (Dhaumee) for protecting the crop was a further deduction. After these deductions, the remaining crop was equally divided between the gutchdar and adiadar ryot. In some instances, the ryot was allowed two Cottahs of land for each plough free of rent as Khauna-baree for his house and garden.

It is not difficult to understand that the proportion left to the under-tenant was extremely meagre. The charge of watching over the crops was partial and in justice should be borne by the principal ryot alone. Moreover, the under-tenants had to borrow in the early months of the year for the maintenance of his family and received loans in kind at high rates. An advance of half of the original loan if repaid from the Bhadye and of a quarter if from the Aughunee was to be made, in addition to the stipulation for payment of the full loan. In some pergunnahs, the loan was to be repaid two-fold. But the addiadar's share of the produce was seldom adequate to pay off his debt which continued to be piling on till the under-tenant became absolutely enslaved to his creditor—the gutchdar. Thus under-tenantry kept vast number of tenants in a state of perpetual poverty and misery. Many peasants free but destitute of any means to take up cultivation were, through the intrigues of the principal ryot, degraded to the levels of under-tenants; and the peasants once sunk to the status of under-tenants could hardly recover their former position.

So far we saw how the ryots suffered from iniquities of numerous sorts. But it would be wrong to say that the landholders could run the whole show in their own way. Actually the ryots could take advantages of existing socio-economic conditions to keep in check, if not entirely stop, the tyranny of the landholders. One astute mind (56) pointed out correctly—"In the present state of the country the ryot has in fact the advantage over the zemindar. Where so much land lies waste and so few hands are left for cultivation, the present ryot must be courted to undertake it." The ryot could turn it to his advantage with the help of the looseness of the entire socio-economic organisation. In many districts, the zemindars were just puppets, the wires being pulled by the managers of the estate. The farming system by bringing wild con-

(56) Harrington in his report on Seropoor, 22nd March, No. 14, 1790, Board of Revenue.

fusion in the existing property right tended at times to create conditions which the ryots could make capital of.

Normally the landholders did not like to force ryots to desert by arbitrary exaction. This meant less cultivation and greater injury for him than before. The zemindars had to take into stock so many factors tempting the ryots to desert. Enticing of ryots was a universal phenomenon. In Behar it was common practice for the jageers, milikdars and others to entice away ryots.(57) A lower rate in an adjacent pergunnah operated to bring the relatively higher rate the landholder sought to thrust upon the ryots down to its level, since the lower rate lured away the ryots.(58)

We shall now see how the ryots sought to turn these conditions to their advantage. The practices adopted by the ryots were like answering one deceit by another and the superior numbers of the ryots made possible the successful playing of the tricks. On the ground of declining production the ryots could compel the zemindar to allow some concessions which in the long run made up for the earlier losses. In 24 Pergunnahs, (59) when the land of any ryot degenerated so as to be unequal to the rents, the zemindar instead of lowering the rate and thereby ruling out applications from other ryots for similar indulgence granted other ground at a gross jumma lowered in proportion to the loss sustained on the ryoty land. This was called Teeka grant. During the period of khas collection the farmers and other native collectors sold these grants in big numbers. There were upwards of 50,000 begahs of Teeka grant collusively made (Karsagee Teeka). The ryots had resort to several artifices to reduce the rent. In Purnea (60) many ryots engaged for some villages for one or two years with no other purpose than to lower their rents. This they did by granting pottahs to their relations and also by forcing other ryots to abscond on their entrance into the farms, and thereby leaving the lands uncultivated in the first year. Naturally they occupied it themselves in the 2nd under pottahs of a very low rate. After the expiry of the lease they continued in possession mainly due to the carelessness of the zemindar's amlah. A like practice (61) was followed by the ryot in leaving fallow a great proportion of land just before the formation of a new jumma bundy. After the lands were measured and jumma bundy formed on the basis of the actual cultivation, the ryot resumed the cultivation of the fallow land and escaped detection by a benaup (62) compromise in the following year. The renter could not remedy this evil by settling a new ryot of his choice, the ryots invariably made a common cause in this sort of affair and could keep out any new comer from undertaking the cultivation. In Dinajpur (63) a similar practice obtained. A ryot holding 10 begahs of land never cultivated more than 5 or 6, the rest lying fallow sometimes for

(57) 19th Aug., No. 57, 1788, Board of Revenue.

(58) 22nd Oct., 51, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(59) 8th May, 54, 1787, Board of Revenue.

(60) 10th Feb., G.G.C. (Revenue Dept.) progs., 1790.

(61) 7th July, 27, Board of Revenue, 1790.

(62) Payment of a paltry sum as a compromise.

(63) 10th Feb., G.G.C. (Revenue Dept.) progs., 1790.

2 or 3 years. Some indulgence had to be shown to make up for rent of that part of his land which lay waste. In Bauldacaal (64) the ryots occupying waste land were charged with half-a-year's revenue. The practice was called Woosool Poteeta. New cultivation was assessed generally at $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the full jumma, which induced many ryots to quit the old and take up new land. Lands under the terms of Fusslee and Tapassee did not differ in quality from Amun land, but the assessment on the former was much lower. The difference arose in the time of cultivation and the nature of articles cultivated. This difference in the rate of assessment tempted the ryots to conceal their amun land under the above names. The difference in assessment on the Dess Cool (Khodkhost) and Par Cool (Pykhist) ryots was another scope for deceit. The Dess Cool ryots could defraud the revenue by holding lands as Par Cool under feigned name. Sometimes Saubuk (cultivation of the former year) was put down as Insaab and Ezafare (new cultivation of the present year) and the ryots evaded a part of the payment on account of the former. In Purnea (65) it was common with the ryots to transfer a part of the jumma with a proportion of land to a brother or other friend. The ryot thus effecting the transfer continued, by the rule of the pergunnah, to be answerable for it during two years, after which he was no more held responsible. The new malguzar, according to the plan thought out before, absconded. The jumma was written off and the cultivation continued on the reduced jumma and the former owner stepped back into the old shoes. In some other cases, the ryots under the pretence of inability to continue cultivation applied for reduction of jumma in proportion to the quantity of land given up, the ryots in these cases took out Sepoordah Pottah stipulating liability to pay original jumma in case the ryot resumed cultivation of Sepoordah land. The ryots generally escaped detection by the ignorance or connivance of the under-renters. Any how he could at least get rid of worst lands estimated at the highest denomination in their rates and retain the more fertile lands evidently on a fairer jumma-bundee. Then growing complications in the distinction of articles produced in the pottah of the ryot proved at times favourable to the ryots. (66) The distinctions were formerly few and little more than were necessary. These consisted of two or three distinctions of Shalee or rice lands and as many of the Bhowlee or Rubee lands, to which were added Turkaree garden. Two ground rents, more, of the land on which the ryot resided regulated not by the measure of the land, but assessed on the houses were included. One was termed Neeman, a real ground rent, and the other Sayr considered as a rent for the melon etc. grown on the thatch. But with bigger number of distinctions of soil and produce being introduced in the pottahs, the ryots sometimes transferred land from the first sort to a lower denomination of the same produce.

The ryots did not fail to get rid of specific cases of iniquitous produce rent, though in all these, benefits were limited mainly to the richer section

(64) 7th May, 33, Board of Revenue, 1789.

(65) 7th July, 27, B. of Revenue, 1790.

(66) 7th July, 27, Board of Revenue, 1790.

of the peasantry. In some pergunnahs of Purnea the practice of the ryots to convert produce rent into money rent was widely in vogue.(67)

By the Bhowlee tenure, the ryot paid about 4 Rs. per begah. But to encourage cultivation, a considerable number of ryots were allowed for every 20 begahs Bhowlee 2 begahs nugdee at the rate of 1 Re. 8'as. per begah. In Tirhoot (68) when the lands were of a better sort being adjacent to the Dhee and capable of yielding a more valuable kind of grain than such stipulated for in the Bhaulee, a fixed assessment of money was taken at different rates. The ryot bent on perpetuating it practised an artifice. A wealthy riot taking a village in farm forced the poorer cultivators by oppression to quit the grounds which lay waste one or two years. The zemindar to restore these to cultivation had no other way but to grant these to the ryot at a reduced money rent. The ryots by collusion obtained many nuckdee pottahs. The ryots by fraud and collusion had the most productive lands measured for money rent and pointed out for produce rent those lands in which the crops failed. Finding produce small of the ill-cared for Bhowlee land, the renter gladly allowed a pottah at a low money rate. Where the agreement was that half produce rent and half money rent would be paid, the ryots neglected the lands assigned for produce rent and ultimately won nugdee rates for these lands. The ryots knew that nugdee rate was generally lower than the Bhowlee rate and that nugdee rate once granted could be prolonged on this or that pretext.

In point of fact, there was, as Colebrooke reported, a marked tendency in the decline of produce rent in Purnea. Formerly the Dhurumpore pergunnah in Purnea was entirely regulated by payment in kind, anciently by an actual division of crop, more lately by an estimation of the crop valued at the market price. But intrusion of money rent was a fact in the eighties of the 18th century. In Gondwara, Teeka rates widely prevailed even before 1765, excepting Dera Khawasspore where payment in kind was not discontinued until 1192. In Beernagur as late as the year 1177, half the cultivation was run on produce rent, but in 1180, the whole was become Teeka except 8 villages, where produce rent was in force for so much only as exceeded the jumma of the pottah. In Bhowanypore, formerly cotton was the only produce cultivated at money rates, but from 1180 leases were granted at Teeka rates for other produce also. In 1185, the whole amount of Teeka was only 10,000 Rs. In 1196 the figure shot up to Rs. 23,000. Boglepore is another case in illustration.(69). Excepting Khurref crop for which payment was mostly in Nukdy, produce rent in other articles of produce was common. In 1792, the proportions which the general crops—Budvy, Khurruf and Rubee

(67) Important sources are the following (a) Collector of Purnea's report on the Queries relating to Decennial Settlement, 11th Feb., G.G.C. (Revenue Dept.) progs. (b) Cutcherry proceedings of the same Collector, in Dhurumpore, 1st April, No. 18, Board of Revenue, 1790. (c) Report of Colebrooke, Board of Revenue, 20th Dec., No. 40, 1790; 22nd Dec., 51, 1790.

(68) 22nd June, 77, Board of Revenue, 1787.

(69) 28th Dec., No. 1, Board of Revenue, 1791; 9th May, 18-19, Board of Revenue, 1792.

bore to the annual jumma and that of produce rent and money rent in each case were as follows :

		Money Rent		Produce Rent	
		As. G.	As. G.	As. G.	
Budvy	...	2 10	2 5	0 5	
Khurreef	...	5 10	3 10	2 0	
Rubby	...	8 0	4 10	3 10	

From what I said already, certain factors operating to lessen the magnitude of produce rent are clear. Firstly the ryots smarting under abuses of produce rent did not let slip opportunity to evade it and to cultivate on money rent generally lower than produce rent. Secondly, the wealthier ryots to reap bigger profits from produce invariably sought to convert produce rent into money rent in the manner explained above. Thirdly while dealing with the abuses of produce rent, we noted how the farmers for their own interest ignored agreement to pay in kind. The zemindar faced with the problem of punctual payment of revenue and overstocked local market of the areas where produce rent obtained, as a result of absence of any wide market (70) had an interest to take money rent. The zemindar could not possibly wait till the sale of the produce would fetch him money whereby to pay revenue. The plenty of produce created, paradoxically enough, a problem for the zemindar ; it meant a sharp fall in the neerickbundee, it meant lesser purchasing power for the ryots who could not dispose of their produce. The zemindar to tide over the imminent crisis deemed it expedient to take money rent. In Sylhet, where the only produce was the coarsest sort of rice for which there was obviously no market, a plenty production uncommonly reduced the price and it is not difficult to guess the plight of the zemindars. Fourthly, operation of money market made produce rent superfluous in areas where the scarcity of specie was less acutely felt. From estimation of crops valued at current market rate to actual payment in money, it was not a far cry. The first tended easily to lead to the second. But it is to be noted that at first substitution of Teeka rent for produce rent was a fair equivalent, but subsequently gradual exactions definitely upset the balance against the ryots.

The introduction of the Permanent Settlement by bringing more rigidity into the economic organisation and legally investing the landholders with proprietary right of land created new conditions which prolonged and perpetuated certain evils and touched off the operation of a sheaf of many others.

BENOY CHOWDHURY

(70) With special reference to Boglepur. 6th Aug., 36-37, Board of Revenue, 1790.

Review

TRADE AND FINANCE IN THE BENGAL PRESIDENCY (1793-1833)—By Amales Tripathi,
Orient Longmans, pp. xiii+289. Rs. 20/-.

The four decades that intervened between the introduction of Permanent Settlement in Bengal and the renewal of the East India Company's charter in 1833 witnessed revolutionary changes. The Muslim power in Mysore collapsed for ever, the Maratha empire ceased to exist and the British suzerainty was firmly established in India. The newly founded Gurkha state measured its strength with the foreign conquerors of the plains and its territorial ambition was circumscribed for ever. But Dr. Tripathi has limited his review to the little known sphere of trade and commerce. In the economic field also the period marks the end of one epoch and the beginning of another. The East India Company pinned its faith in monopoly and tried to defend its vested interests against all intruders. The shifting interests were similarly entrenched, but the old citadel was repeatedly assaulted by advocates of free trade and the period ended with the loss of the Company's Indian monopoly and the decline of Agency Houses. Dr. Tripathi bases his analysis on a patient and careful examination of commercial records and he has produced a volume of enduring value. He rightly points out that the balance sheet of the East India Company was mostly misleading and emphasises the importance of Bengal's contribution to the Company's coffer. It was from Bengal that Bombay and Madras were usually financed and the Company played the dual function of a sovereign and a merchant. It was on this account that the Company's government found it necessary to create private property in land for Cornwallis realised that agriculture must flourish before commerce can become extensive. The Permanent Settlement was not inspired by any philanthropic motive. Nor was Cornwallis guided by the idea of creating a landed aristocracy similar to that of his native land. In the meantime the Industrial Revolution had wrought social and economic changes in England which vitally influenced political thought. They had their repercussion on the Company's affairs. Though it is not generally realised Bentham and Ricardo were perhaps more responsible for the rejection of the monopolistic claims than the professional politician or the commercial opponents of the Company whose interests they apparently advocated. The political and economic theories of the West had their reaction in India and as Dr. Tripathi points out "one of the most important effects of the Charter of 1833 and its associate events was the emergence not only of a middle-class but of a constructive middle-class ideology in India on the fulfilment or frustration of which the future of the Indo-British relations depended."

Dr. Tripathi has made an important contribution to the economic history of India and his volume is not likely to be superseded in the near future.

S. N. SEN

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